### ST. MARYS RIVER Oil/Toxic Substance Spill Study **Current Velocities and Directions** 1980-1983

ONTARIO SUGAR WHITEFISH ISLAND GEORGE MICHIGAN NEEBISH ST JOSEPH ISLAND RABER VILLAGE ST. MARYS RIVER DRUMMOND LAKE HURON



**US Army Corps** of Engineers

**DECEMBER 1984** 

**Detroit District** 

Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch

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#### ST. MARYS RIVER

OIL/TOXIC SUBSTANCE SPILL STUDY

CURRENT VELOCITIES AND DIRECTIONS

1980-1983

BY

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

DETROIT DISTRICT

GREAT LAKES HYDRAULICS & HYDROLOGY BRANCH

DECEMBER 1984

# ST. MARYS RIVER OIL/TOXIC SUBSTANCE SPILL STUDY CURRENT VELOCITIES AND DIRECTIONS 1980-1983

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#### APPENDIX A

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for St. Marys River, Reach 1, which commences at Point Iroquois, Michigan, in Lake Superior and concludes at the Soo Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and Michigan.

#### APPENDIX B

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for St. Marys River, Reach 2, which commences just above the Soo Locks on the upper river, encompasses Soo Harbor, the North Channel to Cass Point and Little Rapids Cut to Frechette Point.

#### APPENDIX C

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for St. Marys River, Reach 3, Lake Nicolet, which commences at the lower end of Little Rapids Cut and concludes at Neebish Island, where the St. Marys River branches out into Middle Neebish and West Neebish Channels.

#### APPENDIX D

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for St. Marys River, Reach 4, which commences at the mouth of Lake Nicolet and concludes at Kemps Point on West Neebish Channel and Johnsons Point on Munuscong Channel.

#### APPENDIX E

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for St. Marys River, Reach 5, Lake Munuscong, which commences at the mouths of the West Neebish and Munuscong Channels. The reach concludes at Point aux Frenes.

#### APPENDIX F

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for St. Marys River, Reach 6, which commences at the extreme lower end of Lake Munuscong near Point aux Frenes and concludes at the south end of Detour Passage at Lake Huron.

### APPENDIX G (bound separately)

Ice/Riverbed Contact Footing Survey, Lake Nicolet; a documentation of the data collected during the winter of 1980 for this study. It describes the methods and techniques employed in obtaining the data. It also contains pictorial representations of these data.

# ST. MARYS RIVER OIL/TOXIC SUBSTANCE SPILL STUDY CURRENT VELOCITIES AND DIRECTIONS 1980-1983

#### INTRODUCTION

The St. Marys River is an integral part of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River navigation system. The mission of the Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch, Detroit District, Corps of Engineers includes the collection of data on this system. In 1975 for the first time in history, the Great Lakes navigation season was extended to a full twelve months on the upper four Great Lakes. This extension intensified concerns regarding the possibility of an oil/toxic substance spill. The Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch was requested to develop a program and to collect data related to velocities and flow directionals for the St. Marys River. These data provide information that could be employed to define the probable areas that might be impacted by an oil/toxic spill.

#### PURPOSE

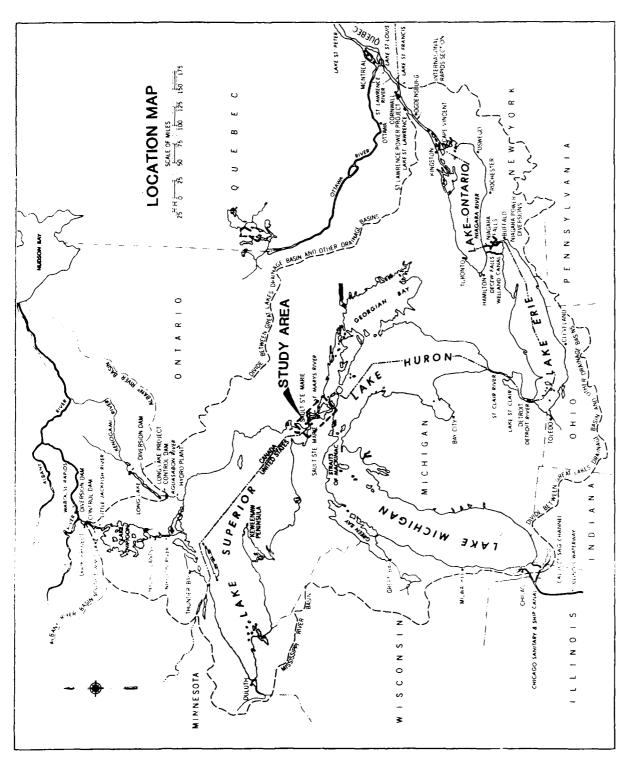
The purpose of this report is to present the data collected cver a four year period, from 1980 through 1983, specifically for the calibration of an Oil/Toxic Substance Spill mathematical model.

#### SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work involved the collection of flow velocities and directions for the St. Marys River system for both open water and during periods of ice cover. The work also included an ice/riverbed contact footing feasibility study for Lake Nicolet (Appendix G).

#### GENERAL STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

The study area of the St. Marys River (Figure 1) has a length of approximately 67 miles from its beginning in Lake Superior to its end at Lake Huron with a vertical fall of approximately 22 feet (Figure 2). In general, the St. Marys River may be subdivided into three distinct areas; the upper river, the St. Marys Falls, and the lower river. The upper river has a length of approximately 14 miles, from Point Iroquois, Michigan, on Lake Superior to the St. Marys Falls located at Sault Ste. Marie. Michigan and Ontario. The fall on the upper river is about two tenths of a foot. The St. Marys Falls area covers a distance of approximately two miles. Within this two mile area are; five navigational locks, three power canals, two bridges, the Compensating Works and the Falls. The fall in this area is approximately 20 feet. The lower St. Marys River has an approximate length of 51 miles from just below the St. Marys Falls, through several channels and lakes to Detour Passage, where the river flows into Lake Huron. The fall on the lower river is approximately one and a half feet.



LONG TERM AVERAGE ELEVATIONS

#### HISTORICAL DATA

River flow and water level data on the St. Marys River have been collected by the Corps of Engineers since 1895. The thicknesses and ice volumes have been collected since 1969 and 1978, respectively. These data are on file in the office of the Detroit District's Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch. To supplement this report, related publications and reports have been included in the bibliography (pages 11-13).

#### DATA ACQUISITION

Since February of 1980, the Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch has been collecting data for the Oil/Toxic Substance Spill Study. Data were acquired by the following five measurement techniques:

Open water current measurements: Subsurface measurements consisting of velocities and directions taken at 2, 4 and 8 tenths of the total river depth, at given locations. These data will provide input to a future mathematical model for predicting the subsurface path of a possible spill.

<u>Drogue Surveys:</u> The following two methods were used to collect surface current data.

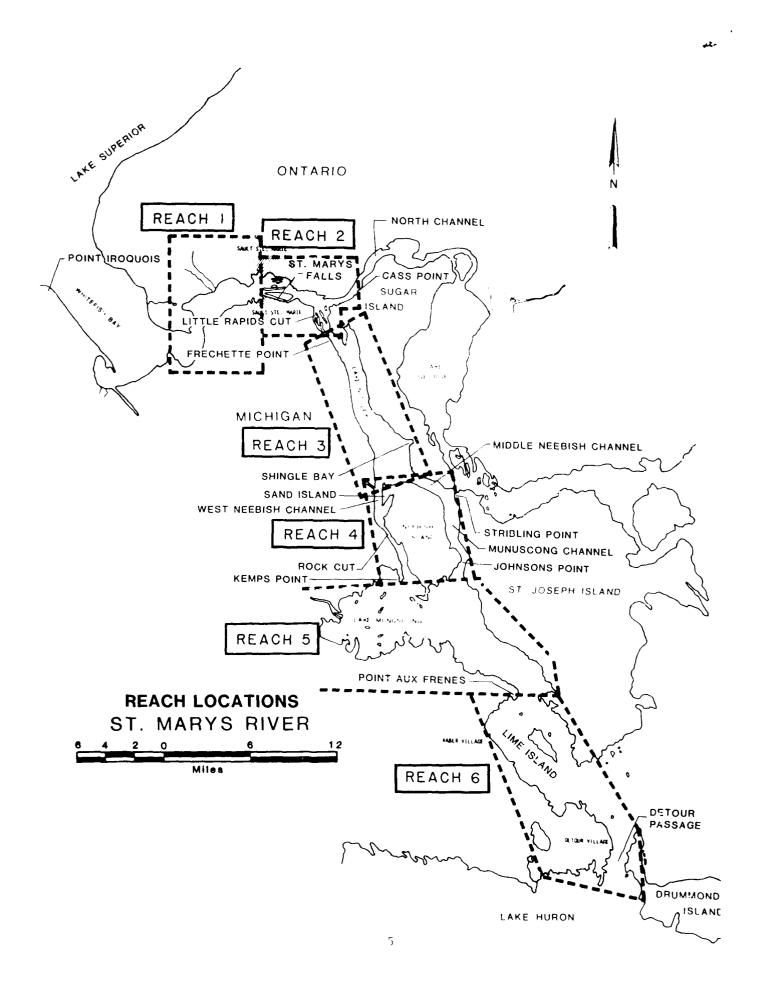
Method 1: An airplane was used to take aerial time-lapse photographs of drogues floating downstream. The drogues for this survey were  $4' \times 4'$  pieces of plywood, which have a line down to a weighted vane. These drogues, which float on the water surface, are painted white for visibility and are individually numbered for identification. This method is also referred to as an aerial drogue survey.

Method 2: Two survey stations are set up to track drogues floating downstream at specified time intervals. The drogues for this survey were long cylindrical devices, which have a line down to a weighted vane. These drogues, which float vertically in the water, are made of aluminum tubing filled with styrofoam. Each drogue is identified by bright red flagging. This method is also referred to as a transit cut-off drogue survey.

Under ice current measurements: Subsurface measurements of current velocities and directions at 2 and/or 4 tenths of the total river depth at given locations. These data will allow for a comparison with velocities and directions of open water current measurements.

Interviewed contact footing survey: Survey to establish the furthest lakeward point the ice contacts the riverbed. This point is referred to as the location of the ice footing. By determining the extent of the ice footing, the scientist may use this information to determine if the ice footing would impact on shoreline spawning and wetland areas in the event of a winter spill.

For the purpose of describing the study's areas of data acquisition, the St. Marrys River was divided into six reaches, (see Figure 3). For each reach one or more of the above measurement techniques were used (see Table on page 7).



#### EQUIPMENT USED FOR COLLECTING CURRENT DATA

Dr 'ng the open water surveys, the 35-foot survey launch the "Korkigian," or the 21 foot "Mon Ark" trihull was used as the data collection platform. A 16-foot skiff was used to set-up the electronic positioning survey system. Two Marsh McBirney, Model #527, electromagnetic current meters were used for the collection of data. This meter provides a direct readout of magnitude and direction of water velocity.

During under ice surveys, two snowmobiles with sleds were used as data collection vehicles. They were used to set up the electronic positioning survey system. The sleds were further used to transport an electromagnetic current meter and an ice-auger. A Marsh McBirney, Model #511 electromagnetic current meter, was used for the collection of data. This model, more appropriate for winter use due to its small size and ability to function at low temperatures also provides a direct readout of magnitude and direction of water velocity.

#### FLOW CONDITIONS

The St. Marys River's flow is monitored and regulated by the International Lake Superior Board of Control. The average monthly flow during periods of measurement are shown in the Table, Lake Superior Outflows During Measurement Periods (page 7).

#### WIND EFFECTS

Wind patterns have an effect on the surface and subsurface flow patterns of lakes and rivers which have a substantial amount of water surface area. Winds in the same direction as the flow tend to increase velocities and winds in the opposite direction tend to decrease velocities, with varying results with winds in between. For example, in low flow areas, such as Lake Nicolet's shallows, strong southerly winds will retard the flow and/or alter its direction. The exact amount of the winds impact on the St. Marys River's velocity and direction depends on water depth, the length and width of the water body over which the wind travels and normal velocity and direction.

During some of the measurement periods, winds had a noticeable effect on the direction and magnitude of surface flow. To document the winds that pocurred during the measurement periods the daily wind speed and direction have been shown on each of the data figures in the appendices. The wind speed and directional data were recorded at the Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, National Weather Service station.

During periods of total ice cover, direct wind effect on flow is negligible. However, winds can cause the rafting of ice, ice buildups and possibly ice jams along the river.

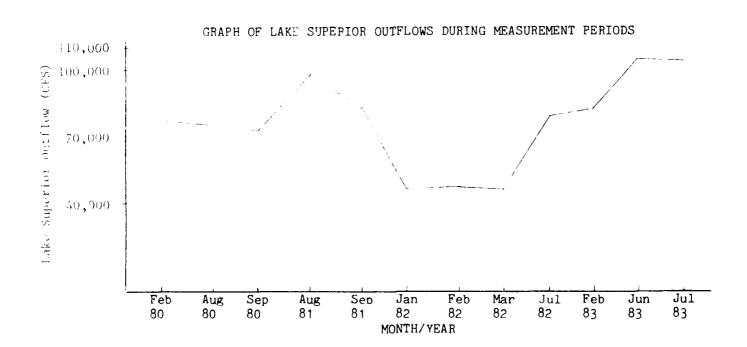
TABLE

Oil/Toxic Substance Spill Study

Lake Superior Outflows During Measurement Periods

MONTH	- YEAR	REACH	MEASUREMENT	FLOW*	CUBIC	FEET/SECOND (CFS)
Feb	J0	2	Ice/riverbed Contact Footing			75,450
Aug	80	6	Open Water			74,500
Sep	80	6	Open Water			71,980
Aug	81	1	Open Water			97,230
Sep	81	1	Open Water			81,100
Jan	82	6	Under Ice			45,380
Feb	82	6	Under Ice			45,450
Mar	82	6	Under Ice			45,390
Jul	82	2,4	Method 1, Drogue Sur	vey		78,450
Feb	83	4	Under Ice			81,740
Jun	83	2,3,4,5	Open Water, Method 2 Drogue Survey	,		104,000
Jul	83	5	Open Water			102,890

<sup>\*</sup>Noble and Woodards Report on Lake Superior Regulation



To further document the long term wind patterns in the study area, a wind graph was prepared (Figure 4), using the 16 principal points of the compass and showing the relative frequency and strength of winds from these directions. The wind speed and direction observations used for this graph were recorded at the Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, National Weather Service station.

#### DATA REDUCTION

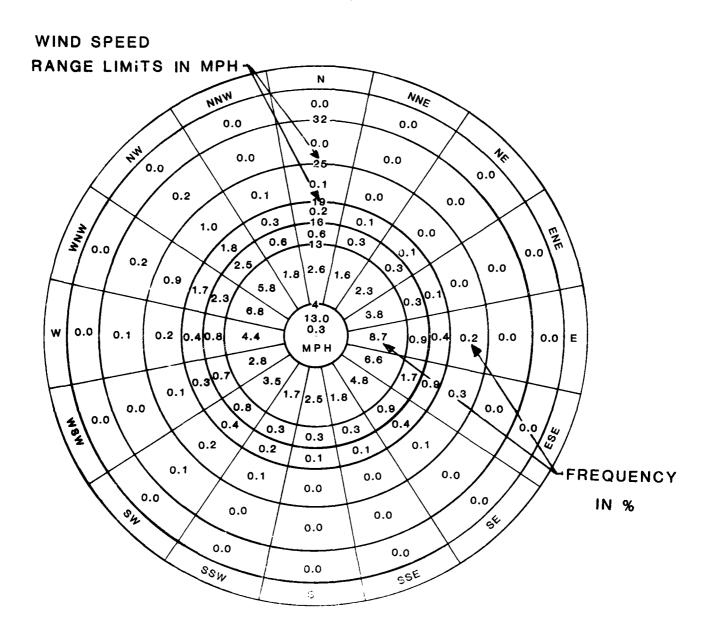
As stated earlier, open water and under ice measurements were made with Marsh McBirney electromagnetic meters. The meters provided a direct readout of the horizontal angle of flow (with respect to magnetic north) and the magnitude (velocity in feet per second) of flow. Drogue survey data were reviewed as follows. Method 1 data consisted of aerial time-lapse photographs of drogues floating downstream. Drogue positions were scaled from the individual photos and were plotted on drogue charts. The positions deduced from each exposure, combined with the recorded time to the nearest second gave the path and velocity of each target as it floated downstream. Method 2 utilized transit cut-off data. The drogue paths were plotted at the intersection of the two angles for each specified time interval. Drogue velocities were determined by computer using the drogues sequential positions and their associated time intervals.

To adequately display the data on the figures in this report the configuration of the St. Marys River required divisions and subdivisions of the reaches. For this reason, each figure has its own scale. Scales of adjacent figures should be noted when making area comparisons. Each figure is identified by reach, shows current and wind data, has a scale and displays a north arrow. To develop these figures the open water, under ice and drogue data in each reach were plotted onto mylar sheets used as overlays. The mylar overlays provided a means of keying in data to the base maps. The base maps were compiled from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Ocean Survey (NOS), Navigational Charts of the St. Marys River. By using NOAA, NOS charts as base maps, depths, contours, channels, shoreline and landmarks can be identified. The results for each reach are described and shown in Appendices A-F. The designation of the types of data on each figure is noted in the List of Figures of each appendix.

#### PROGRAM RESULTS

The Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch developed a program directed toward collection of data related to velocity and flow direction during open water and under ice conditions on the St. Marys River. The program implemented open where and under ice current measurements, and drogue surveys. Subsurface voluty and direction (open water and under ice) measurement techniques and developed which required less manpower in the field than previous Corps methods and reduced data processing times. Surface velocities (drogue survey there best accomplished by using Method 1, type of survey. This type of survey required less manpower than Method 2 and was able to cover great expanses of the river.

## WIND GRAPH ( SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN )



ALL CEILING AND VISIBILITY CONDITIONS

During development of the program it was noted that there were two conditions, flow and wind, that required special consideration.

Flow on the St. Marys River fluctuates with seasonal changes and regulation. Reaches 4 and 6, had winter and summer data at the same locations. The reason for measuring at the same locations was to determine if a relationship existed between currents under an ice cover and those for open water. Data collected thus far does not indicate that such a definable relationship exists. This could be the result of the large flow differences that occurred. Reach 4 had summer flows of 78,450 cubic feet per second (cfs) and 104,000 cfs and a winter flow of 81,740 cfs. Reach 6 had a summer flow of 73,240 cfs and a winter flow of 45,410 cfs.

Wind speed and direction had some impact in the flow patterns shown in this study. Open water patterns are impacted mainly on the surface, but some subsurface impacts are probable. The exact magnitude of the wind related impacts is difficult to determine without an indepth analysis, which is not under the scope of this study. Wind related impacts on velocities during an ice cover, since indirect, are much more difficult to determine and again are out of the scope of this study.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The data presented herein provide hydraulic information for preparation of an oil spill mathematical model of the St. Marys River. However, since the data collected were not adequate to determine if a relationship between summer and winter exists, it is recommended that additional under ice current measurement data be collected. This type of measurement will provide additional data for analyzing the summer/winter relationship and would enhance the calibration and verification of the oil spill model.

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# APPENDIX A ST. MARYS RIVER OIL/TOXIC SUBSTANCE SPILL STUDY CURRENT VELOCITIES AND DIRECTIONS REACH 1

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for Reach 1 of the St. Marys River, Oil/Toxic Substance Spill Study (see Figure 3 of the main report). This reach has been divided into three figures as shown in the Index Figure (page A-1).

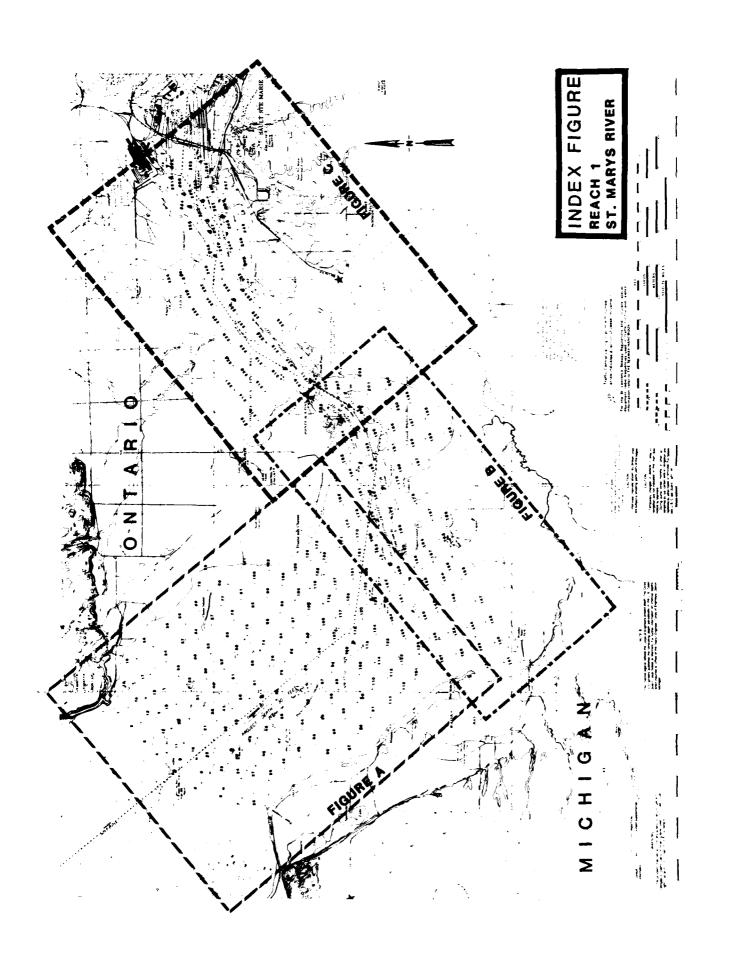
Open water current measurements were conducted between 10 and 24 September 1981 (Flow (SEP) = 81,000 cubic feet per second). Figures A-C display current data collected for each of the 2, 4 and 8 tenths depth, of the total river depth at selected locations. Data are shown as location point (number and circle), direction of flow (arrow) and velocity in feet per second. In addition, each figure has a composite drawing developed from the data documented for that figure.

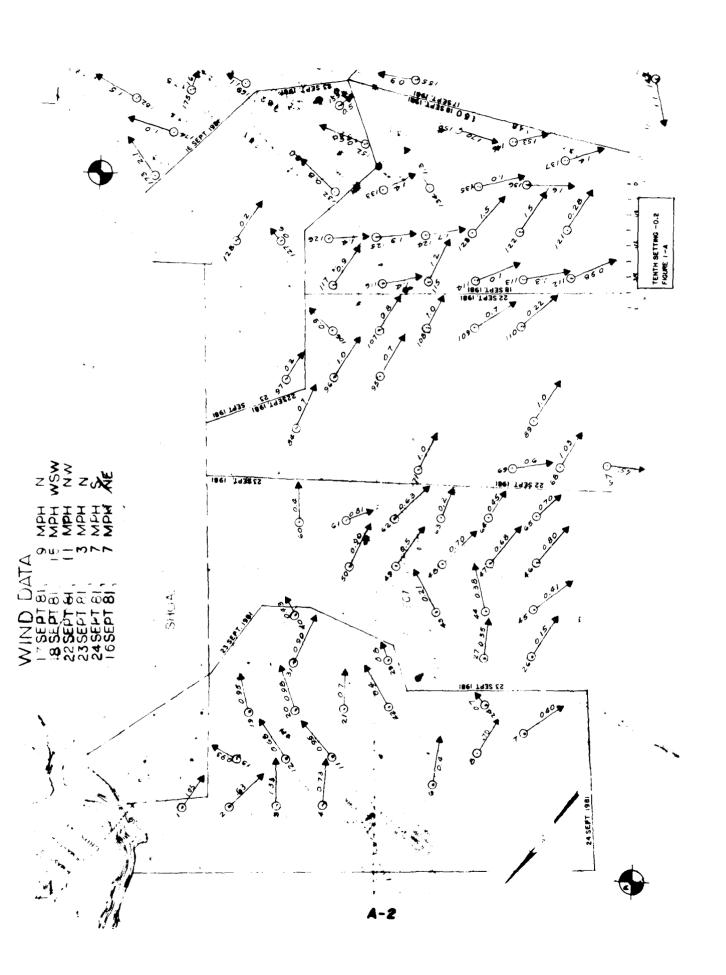
A discussion of measurement and data reduction techniques can be found in . the main report.

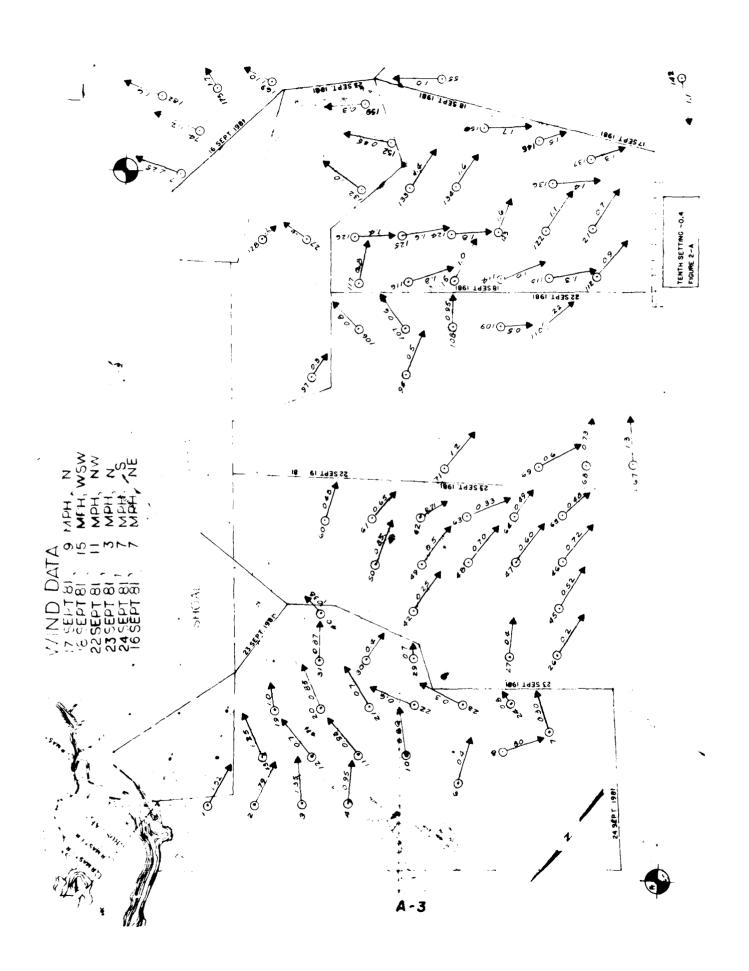
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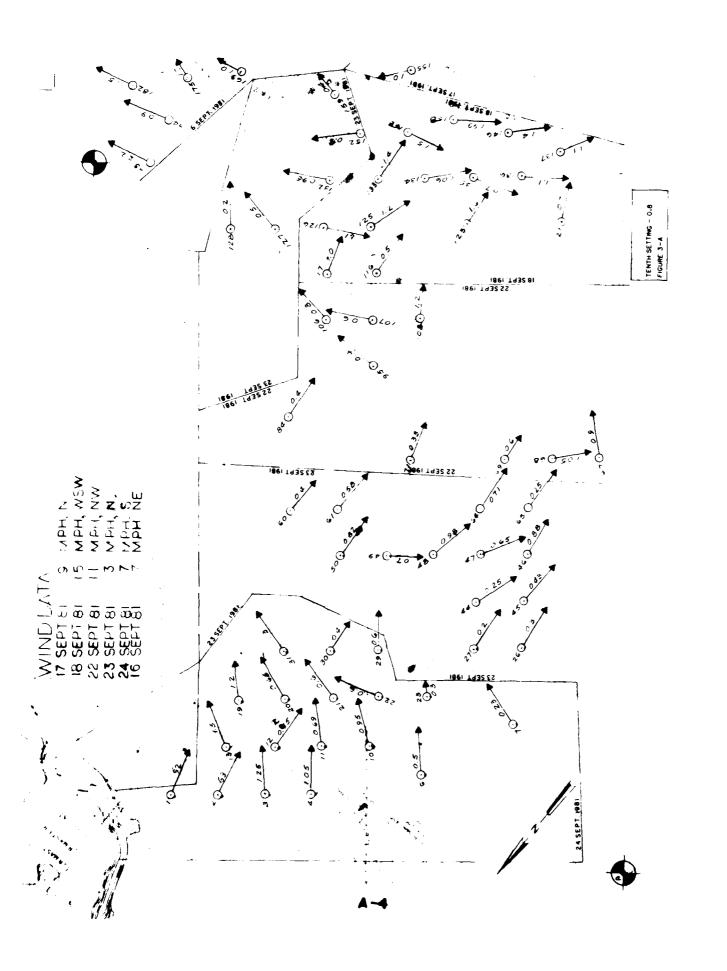
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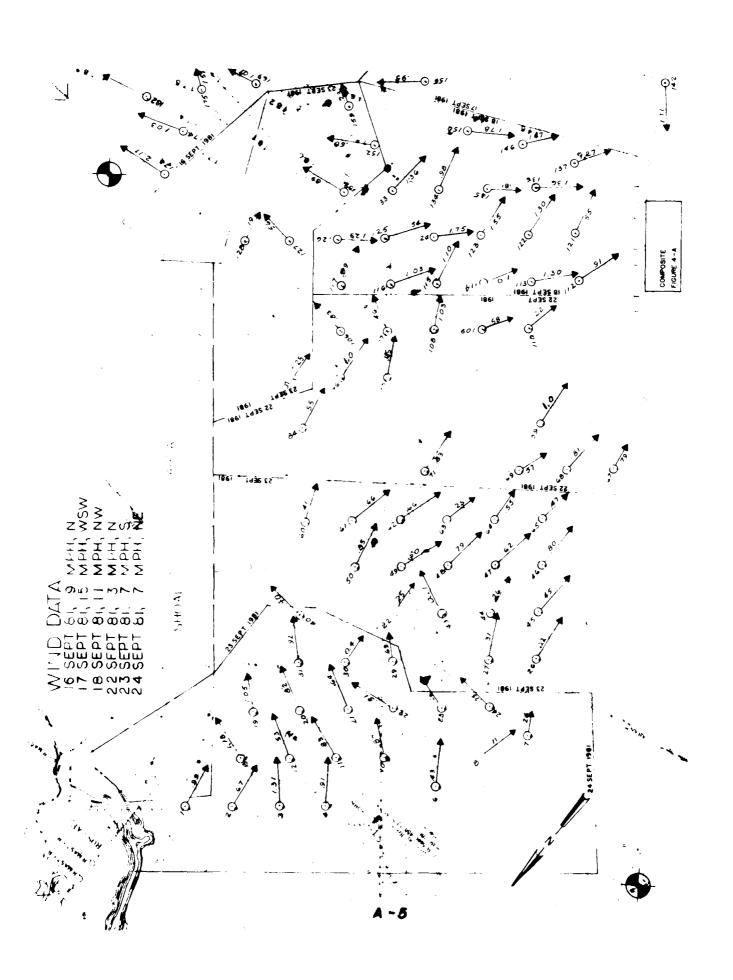
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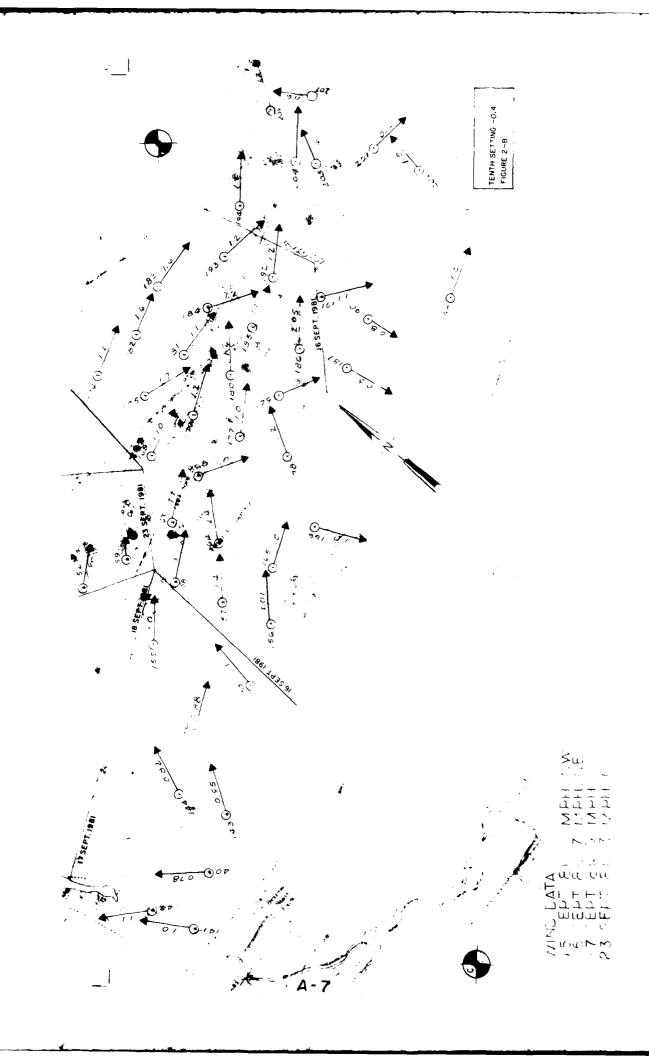


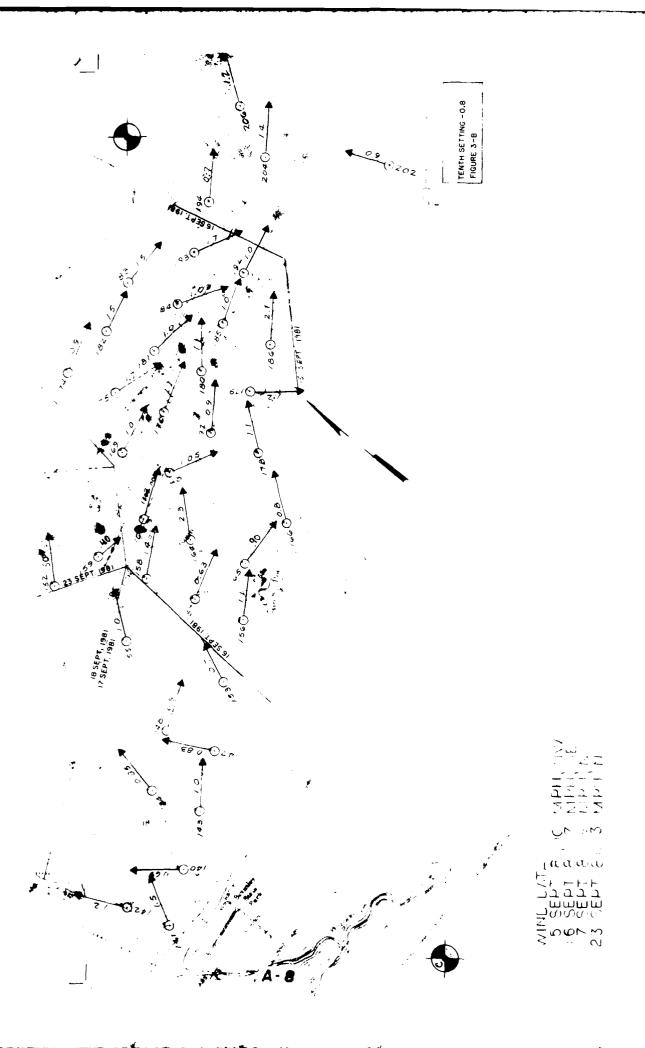


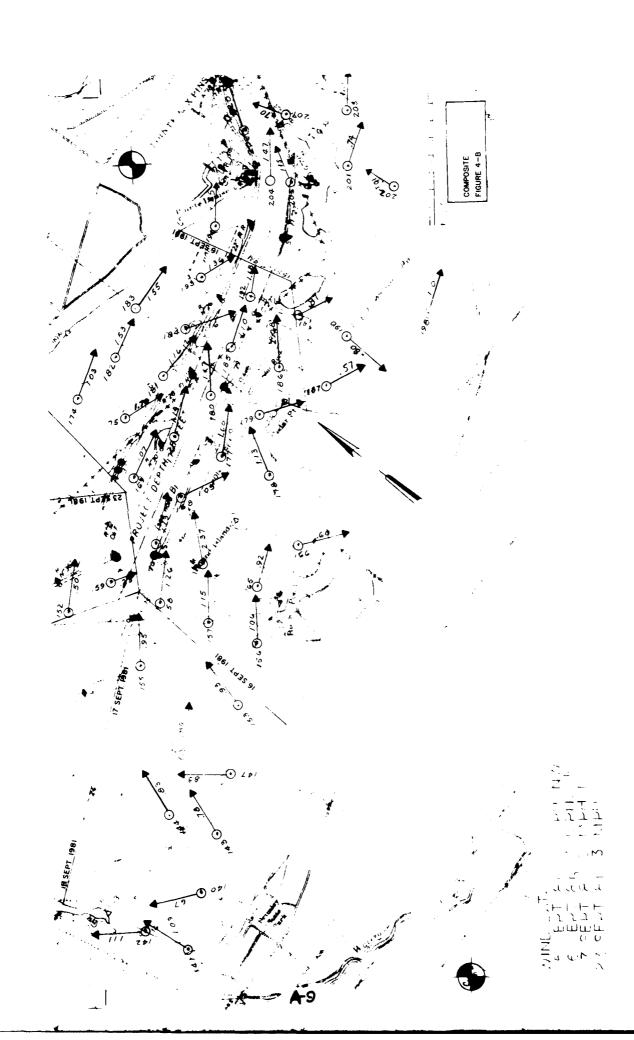


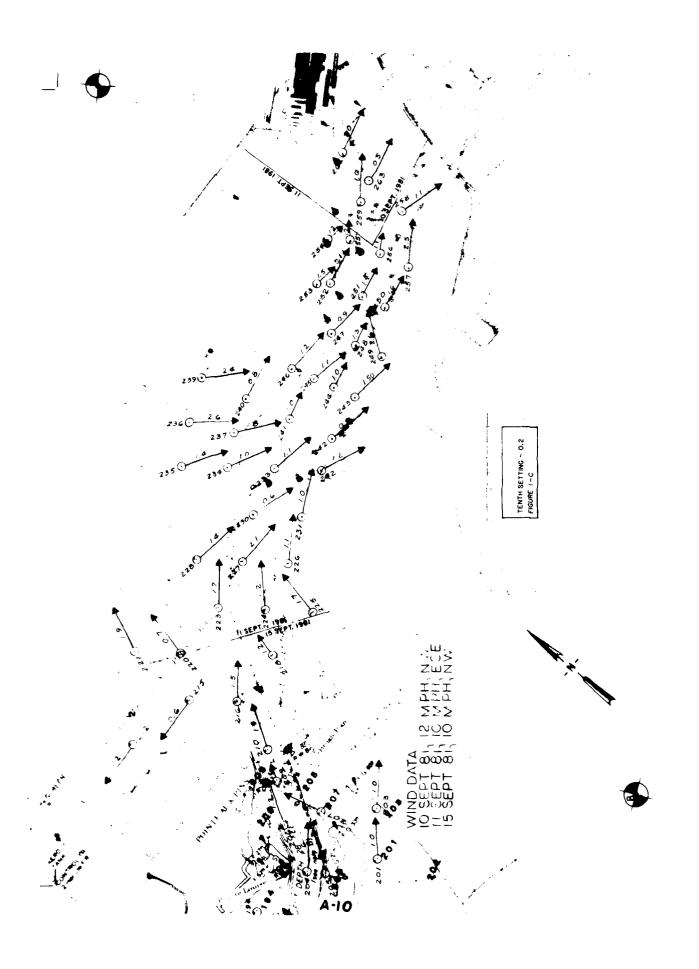




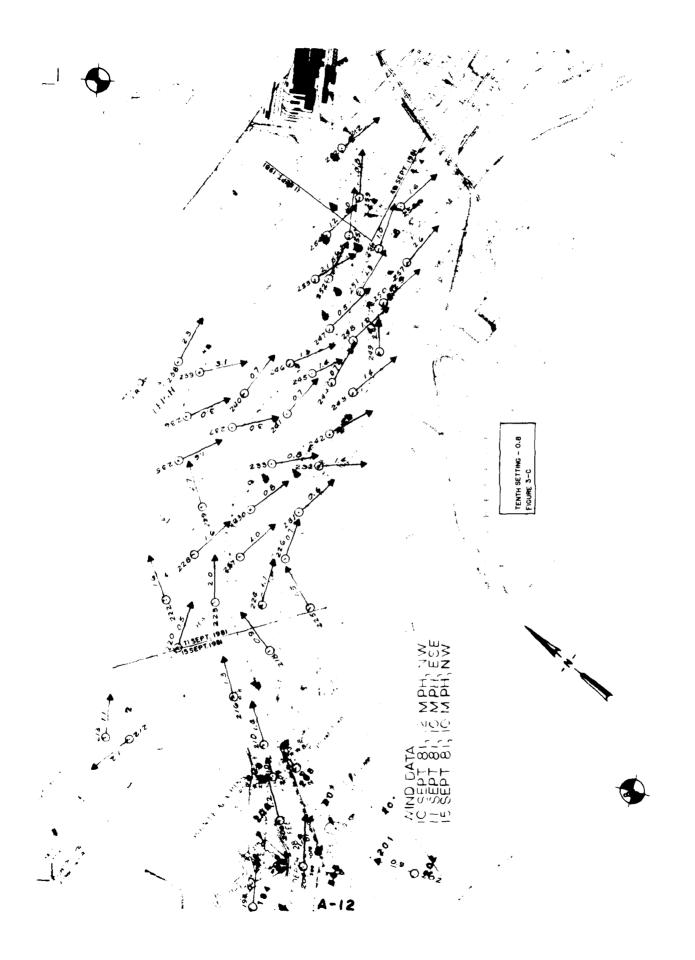


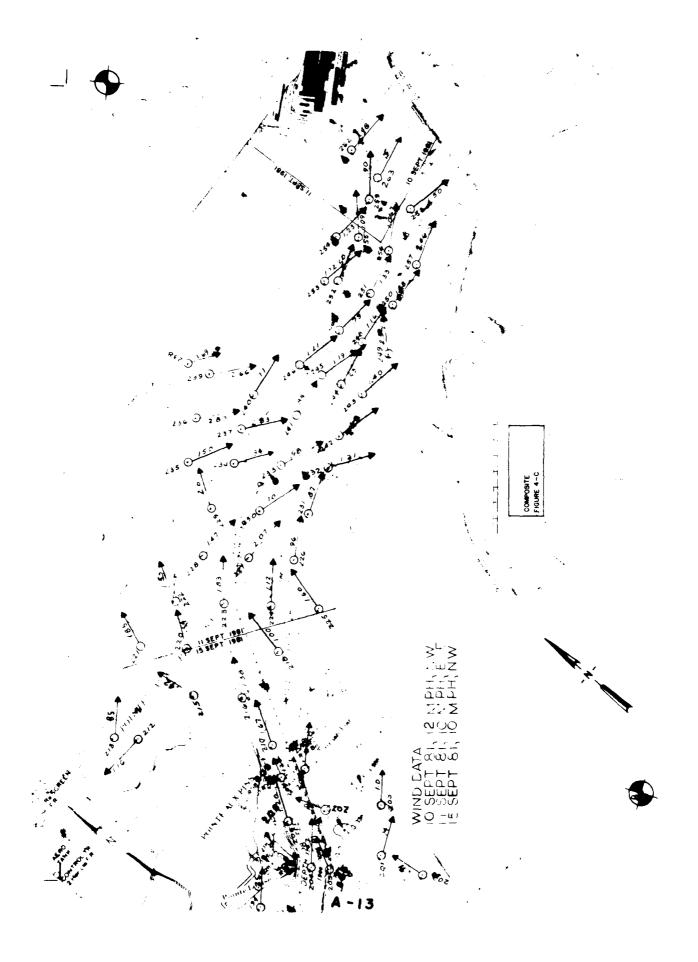












# APPENDIX B ST. MARYS RIVER OIL/TOXIC SUBSTANCE SPILL STUDY CURRENT VELOCITIES AND DIRECTIONS REACH 2

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for Reach 2 of the St. Marys River, Oil/Toxic Substance Spill Study (see Figure 3 of the main report). This reach has been divided into six figures as shown in the Index Figure (page B-1).

Open water current measurements were conducted between 6 and 10 June 1983 (Flow (JUN) = 104,000 cubic feet per second (cfs)). Figures A and B display current data collected for each of the 2, 4 and 8 tenths depth of the total river depth, at selected locations. Data are shown as location point (number and circle), direction of flow (arrow) and velocity in feet per second (fps). In addition, Figures A and B have a composite drawing developed from the data documented for that figure.

Drogue surveys were conducted on 2 and 3 June 1983 (Flow (JUN) = 104,000 cfs). Data collected are shown in Figure C as point of transit intersection (dot), drogue path (line connecting two consecutive dots) and computed velocity in fps (number).

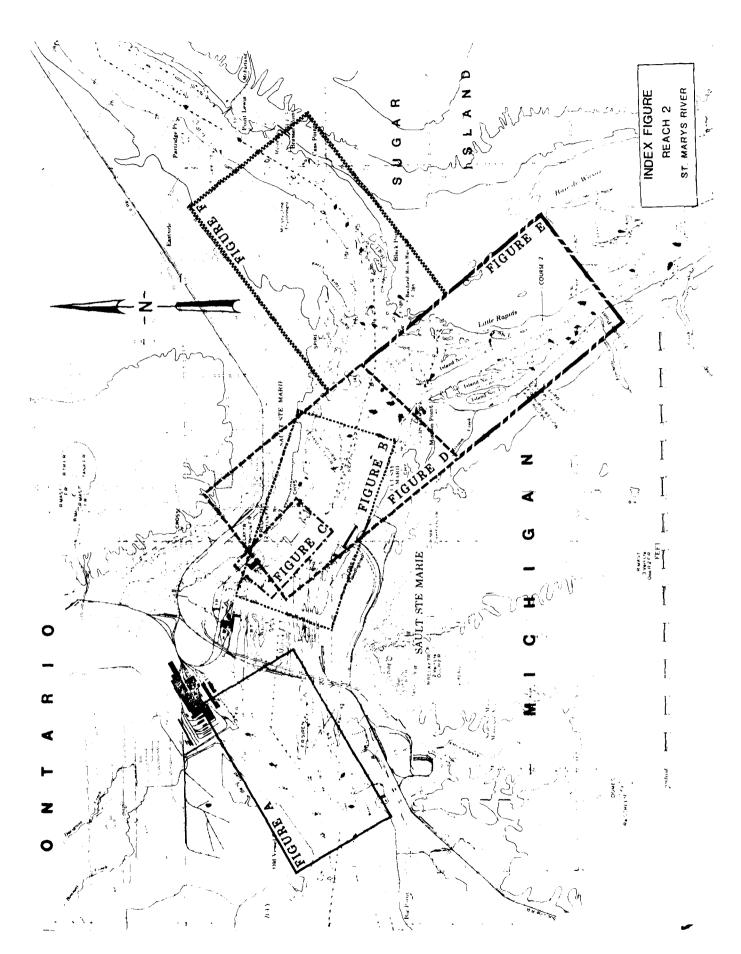
Aerial drogue surveys were conducted on 13 and 20 July 1982 (Flow (JUL) = 78,450 cfs). Data collected are shown in Figures D-F as velocity in fps (number) and direction (arrow).

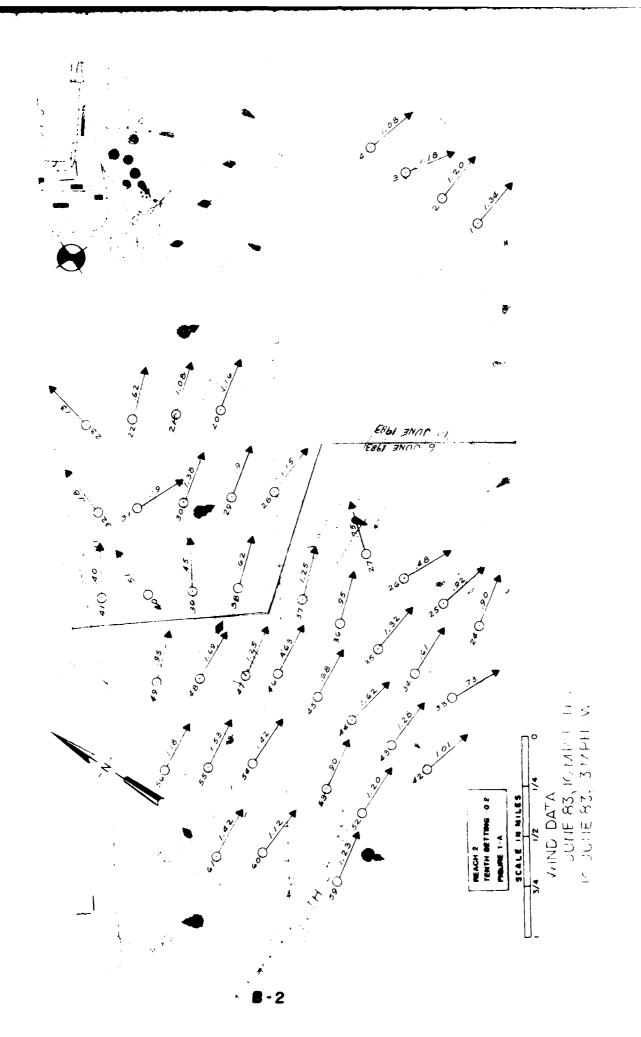
A discussion of measurement and data reduction techniques can be found in the main report.

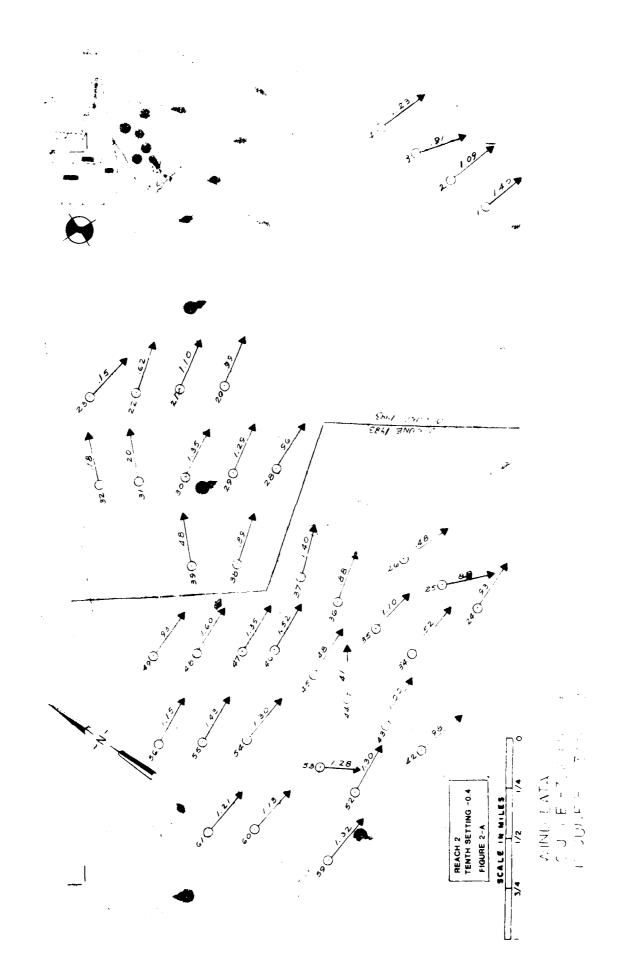
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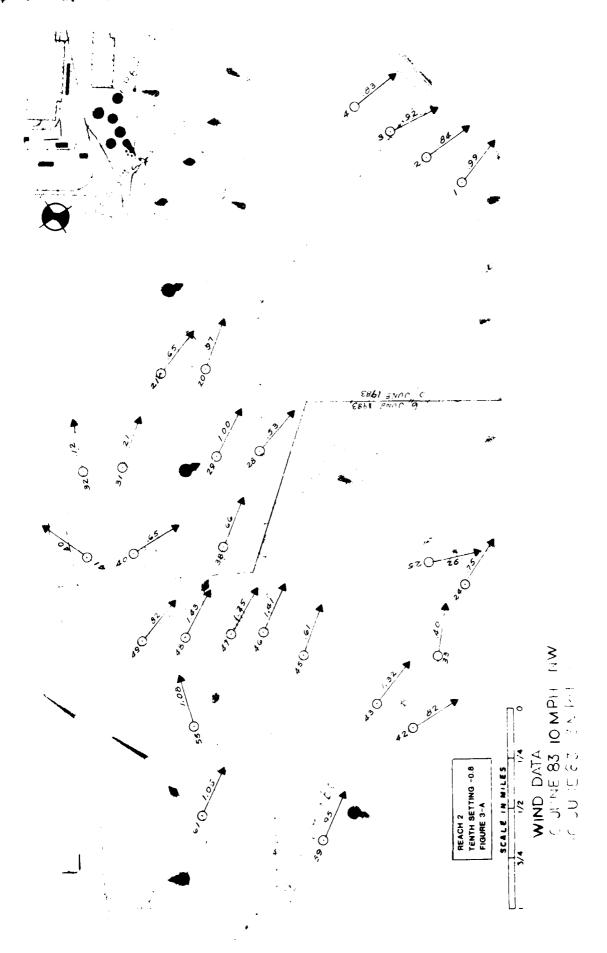
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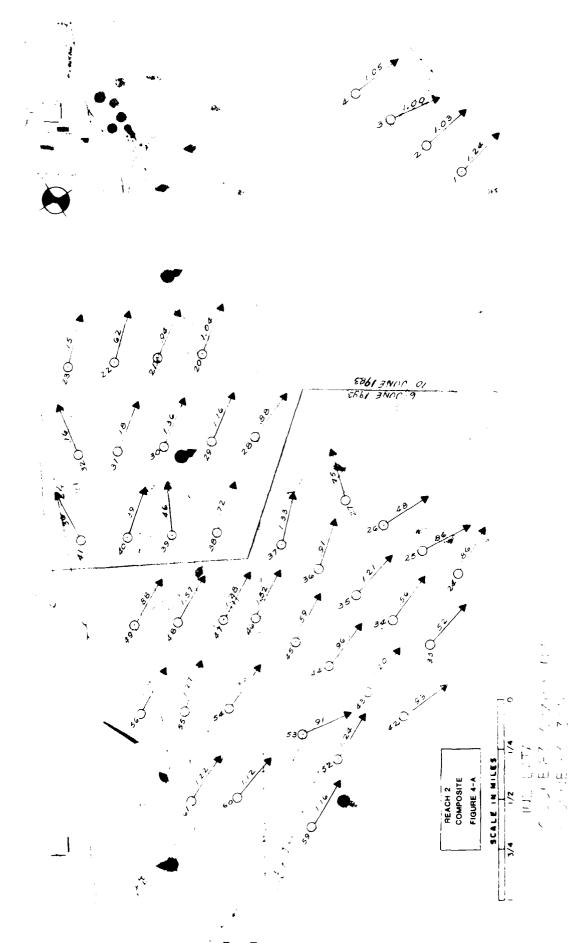




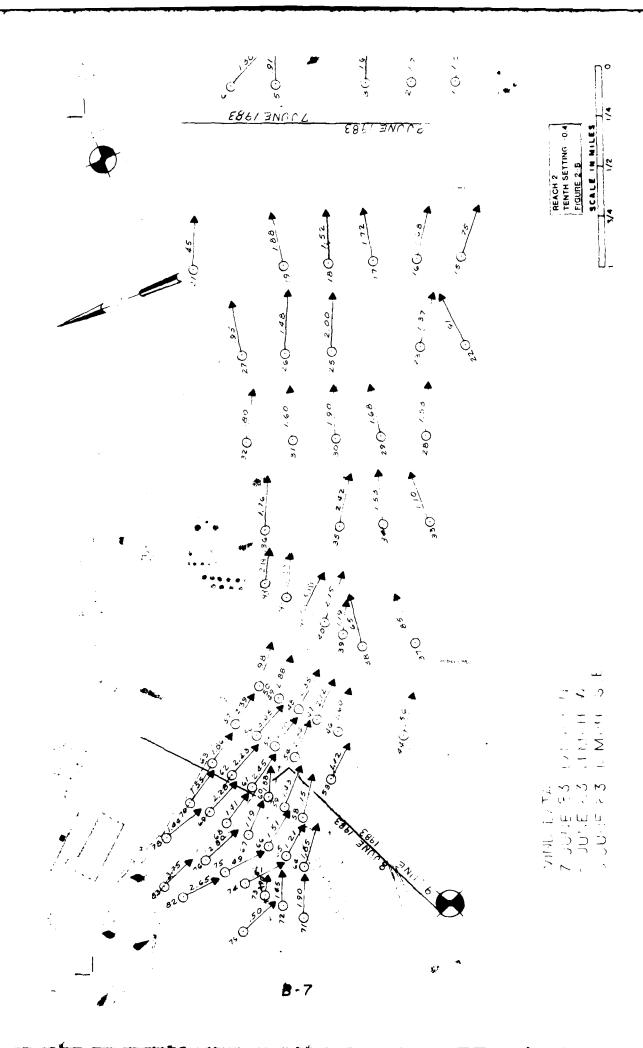


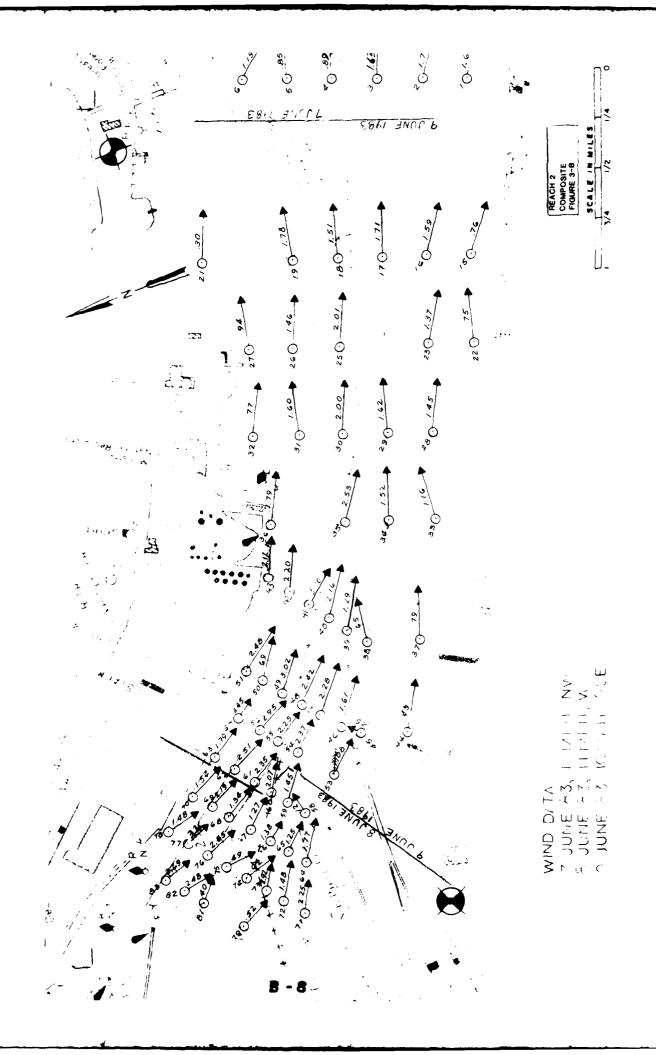
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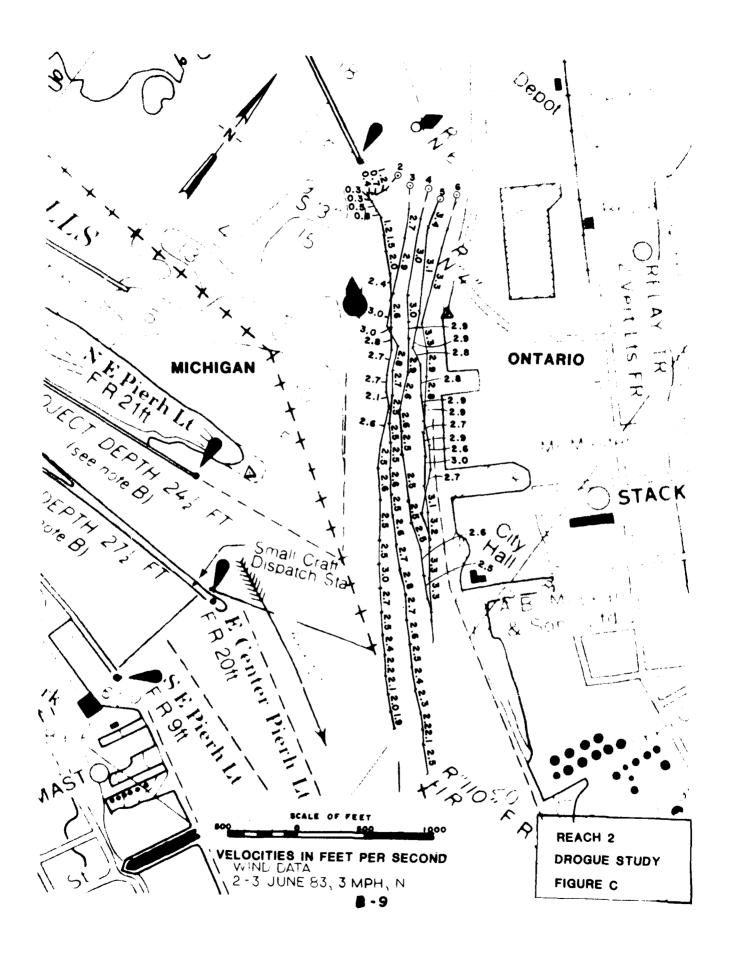


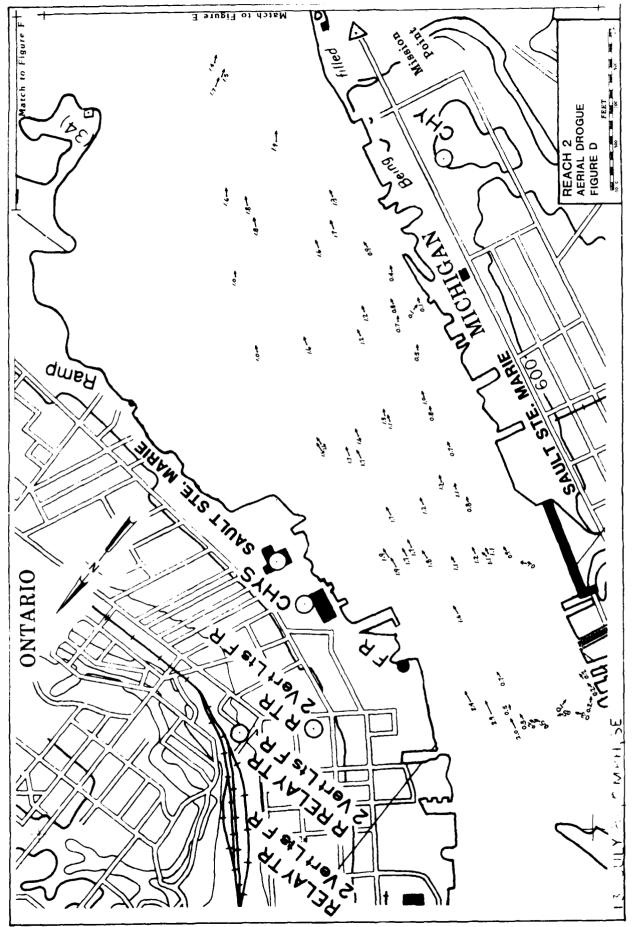




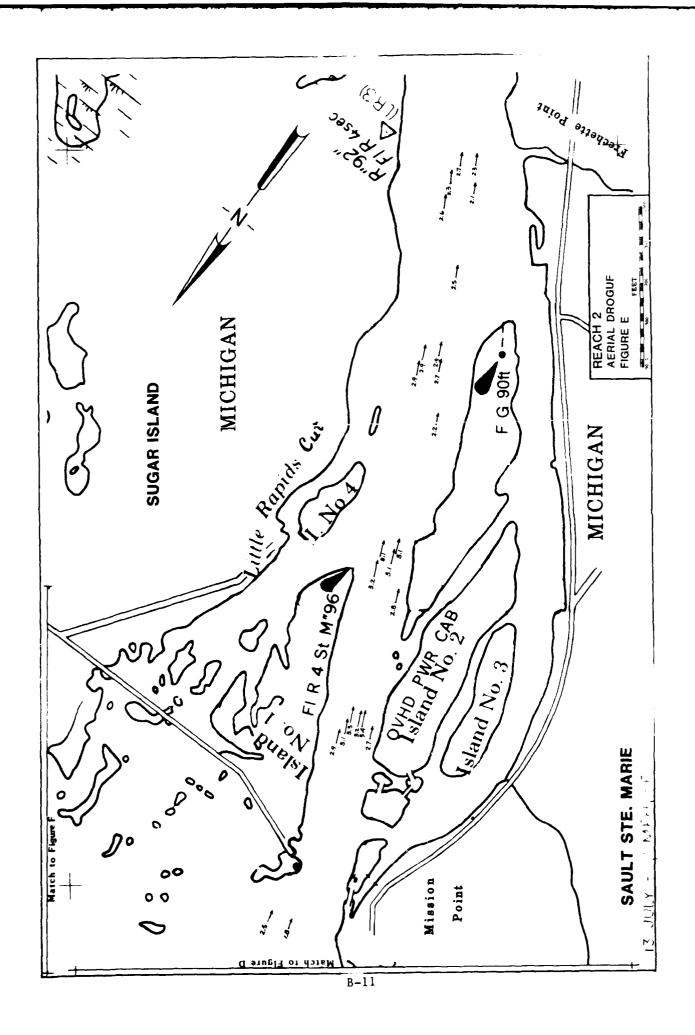


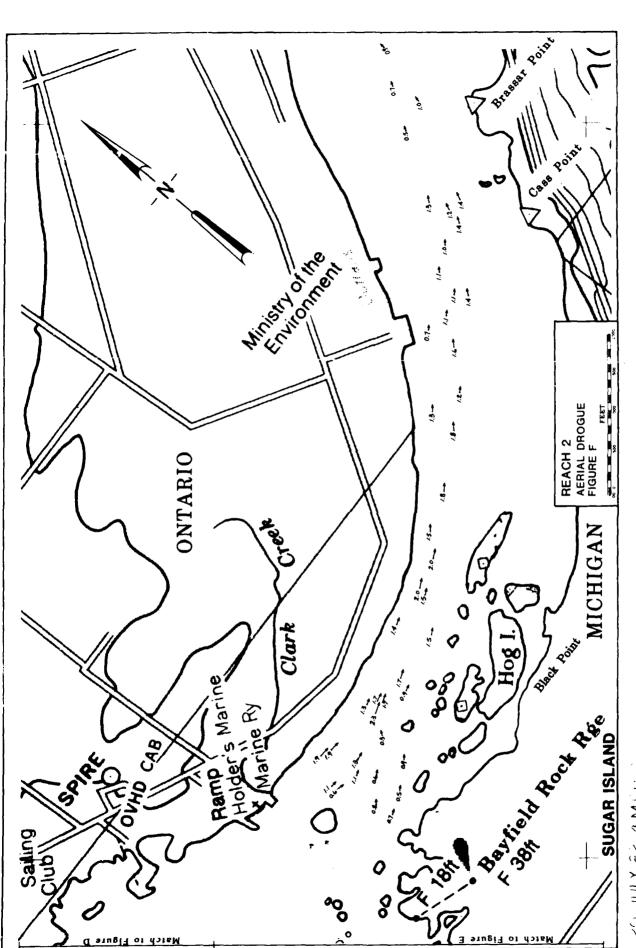






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# APPENDIX C ST. MARYS RIVER OIL/TOXIC SUBSTANCE SPILL STUDY CURRENT VELOCITIES AND DIRECTIONS REACH 3

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for Reach 3 of the St. Marys River, Oil/Toxic Substance Spill Study (see Figure 3 of the main report). This reach has been divided into three figures as shown in the Index Figure (page C-1).

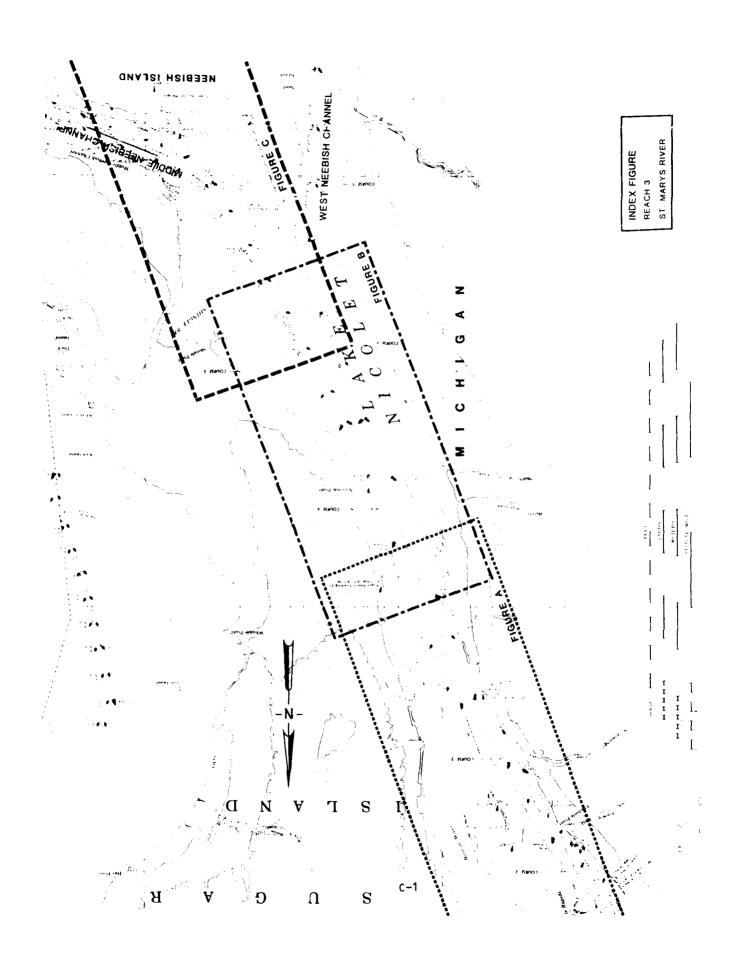
Open water current measurements were conducted on 13 and 14 July 1983 (Flow (JUL) = 102,890 cubic feet per second). Figures A-C display current data for each of the 2, 4 and 8 tenths depth of the total river depth, at selected locations. Data are shown as location point (number and circle), direction of flow (arrow) and velocity in feet per second. In addition, each figure has a composite drawing developed from the data documented for that figure.

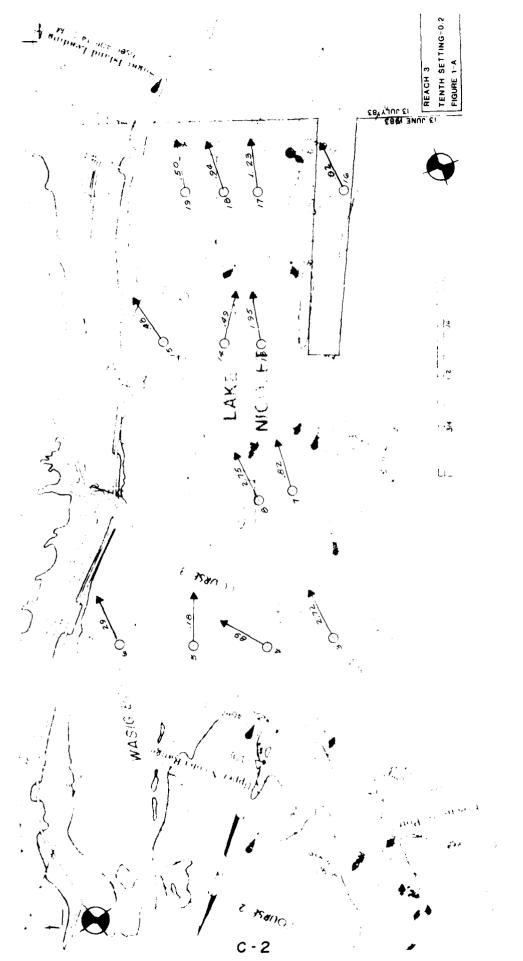
A discussion of measurement and data reduction techniques can be found in the main report.

#### APPENDIX C REACH 3

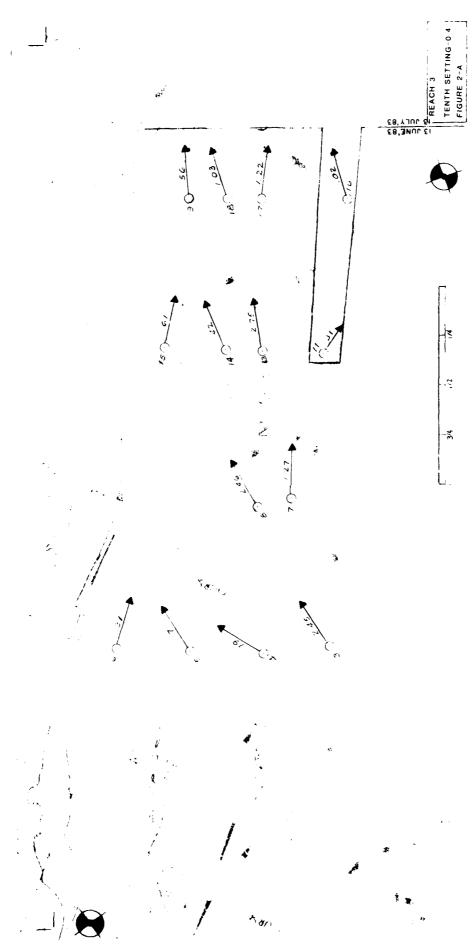
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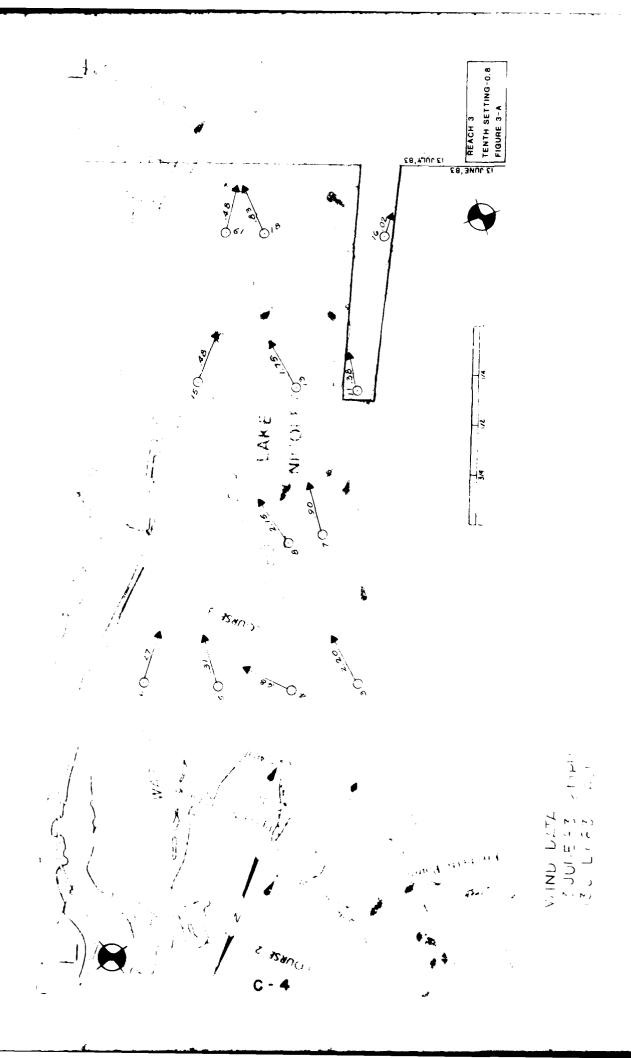




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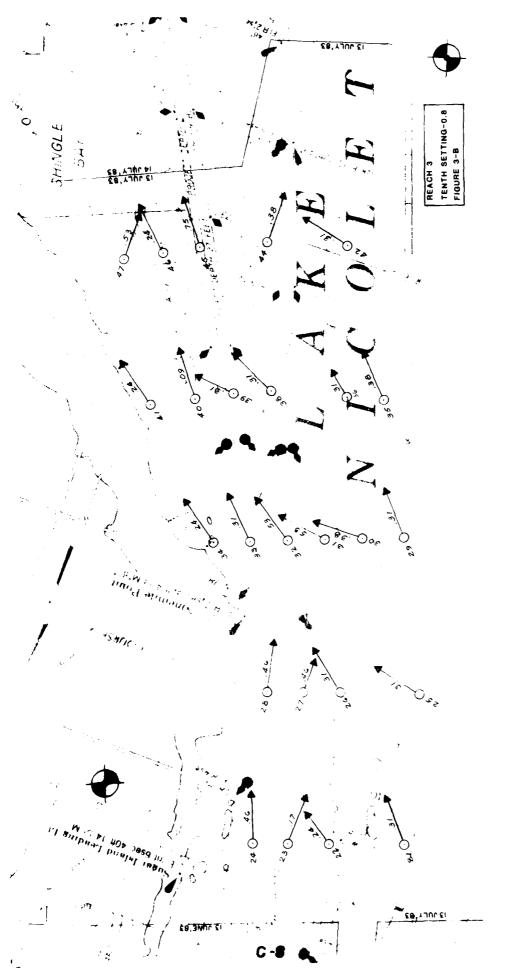


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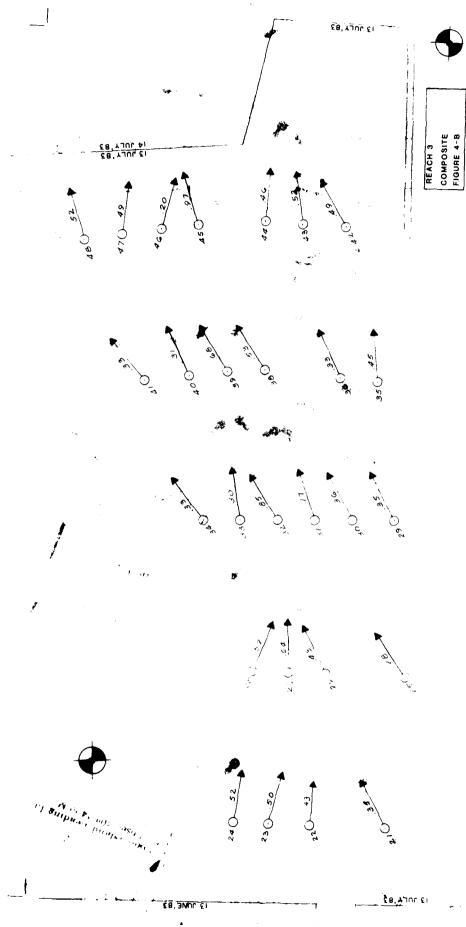
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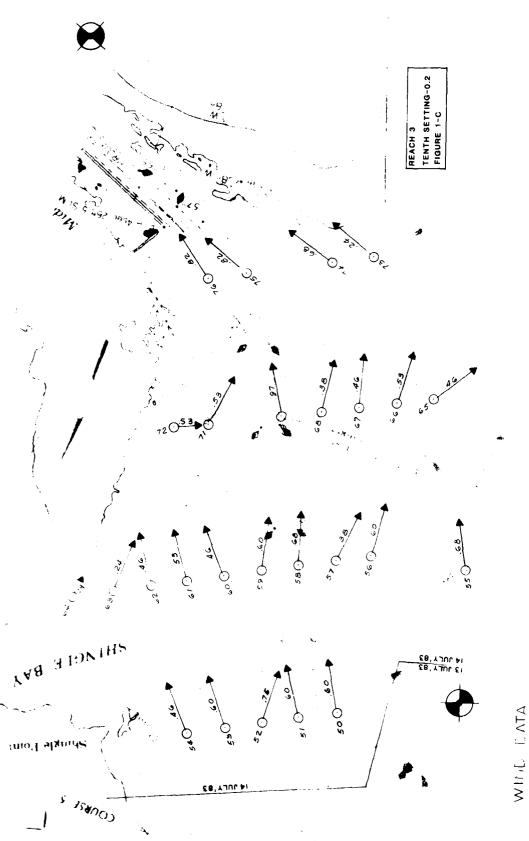
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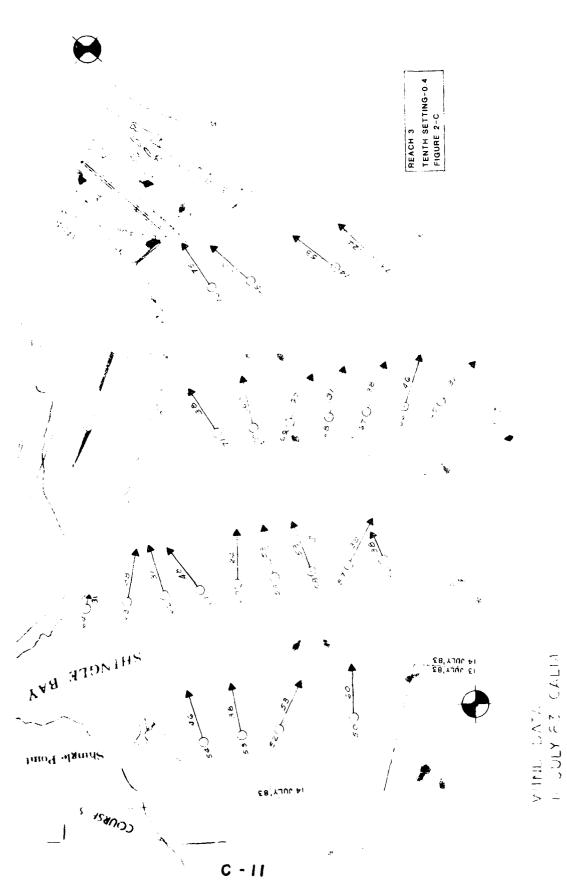


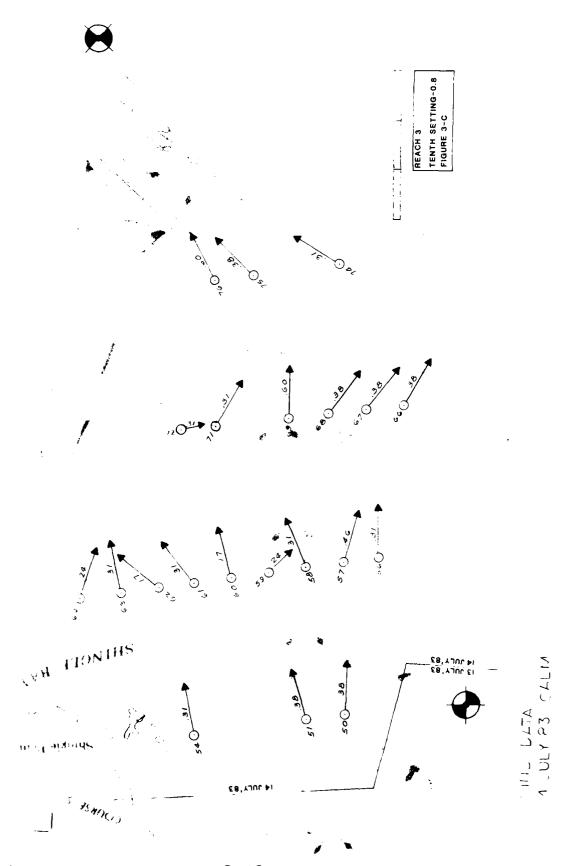
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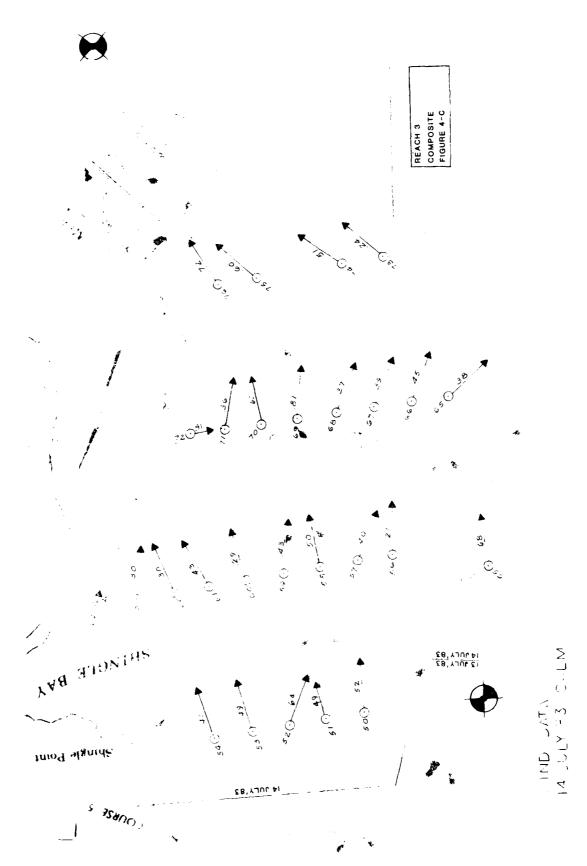


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# APPENDIX D OIL/TOXIC SUBSTANCE SPILL STUDY CURRENT VELOCITIES AND DIRECTIONS REACH 4

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for Reach 4 of the St. Marys River, Oil/Toxic Substance Spill Study (see Figure 3 of the main report). This reach has been divided into five figures as shown in the Index Figure (page D-1).

Under ice current measurements were conducted between 10 and 18 February 1983 (Flow (FEB) = 81,740 cubic feet per second (cfs)). Figures A, B and D, display under ice current data collected for the 2 and/or 4 tenths depth of the total river depth, at selected locations. Data are shown as location point (number and circle), direction of flow (arrow) and velocity in feet per second (fps).

Open water current measurements were conducted between 15 and 17 June 1983 (Flow (JUN) = 104,000 cfs). Figures A, C and D display current data collected for each of the 2, 4 and 8 tenths depth of the total river depth, at selected locations. Data are shown as location point (number and circle) direction of flow (arrow) and velocity in fps. In addition, each figure has a composite drawing developed from the data documented for that figure.

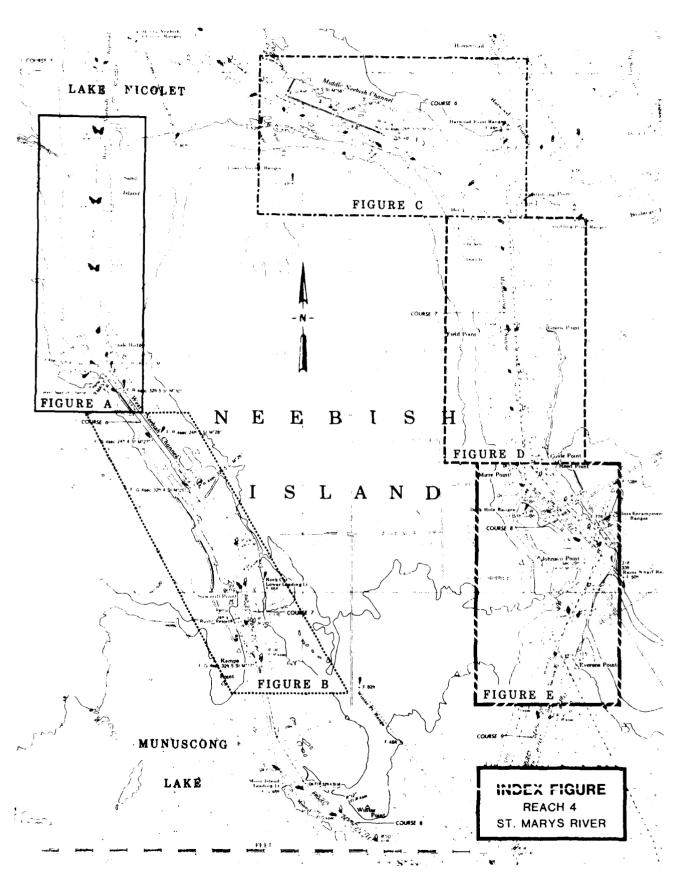
Aerial drogue surveys were conducted on 21 July 1982 (Flow (JUL) = 78,400 cfs). Data collected are shown in Figures B, D and E as velocity in fps (number) and direction (arrow).

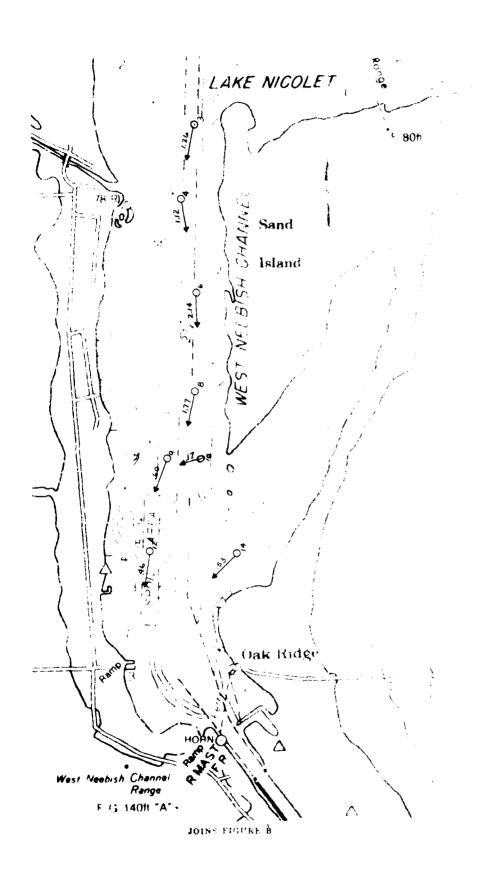
A discussion of measurement and data reduction techniques can be found in the main report.

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REACH 4
TENTH SETTING -0.2
FIGURE 1-A

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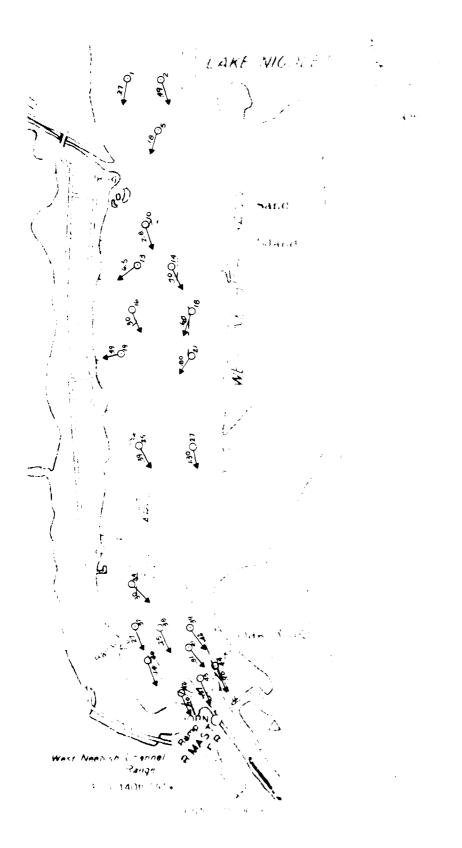
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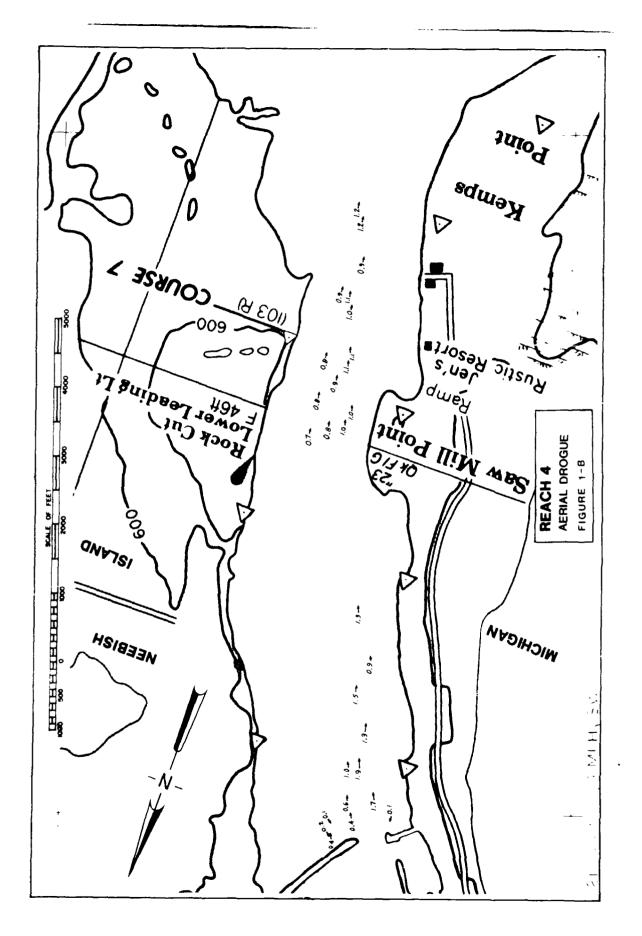
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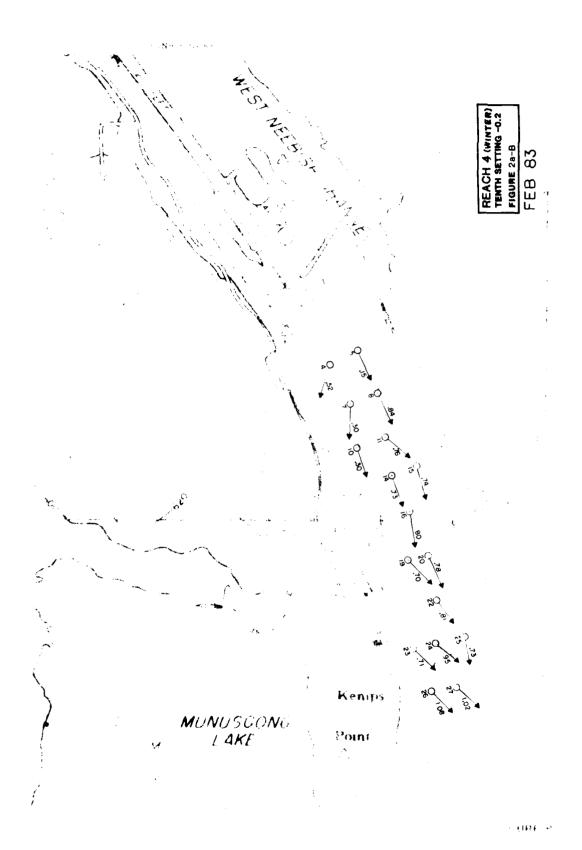
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REACH 4 (WINTER)
TENTH SETTING -0.4
FIGURE 6-A





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REACH 4 (WINTER)
TENTH SETTING -0.4
FIGURE 2b-8
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TENTH 4 TENTH SETTING -0.

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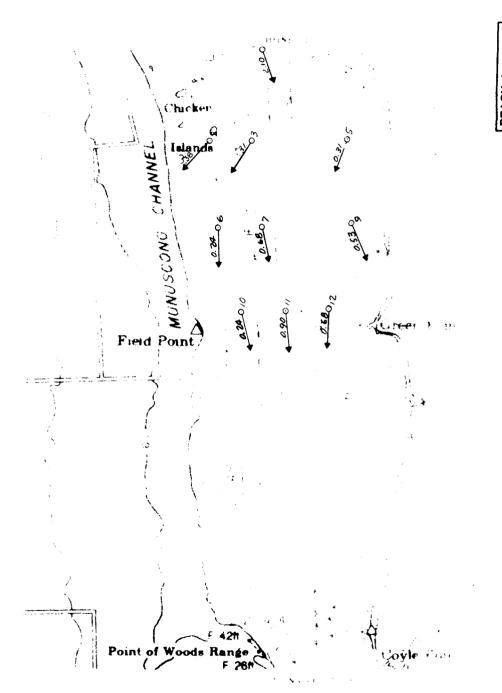
REACH 4 TENTH SETTING -0.4 FIGURE 2-C

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REACH 4 TENTH SETTING -0.8 FIGURE 3-C

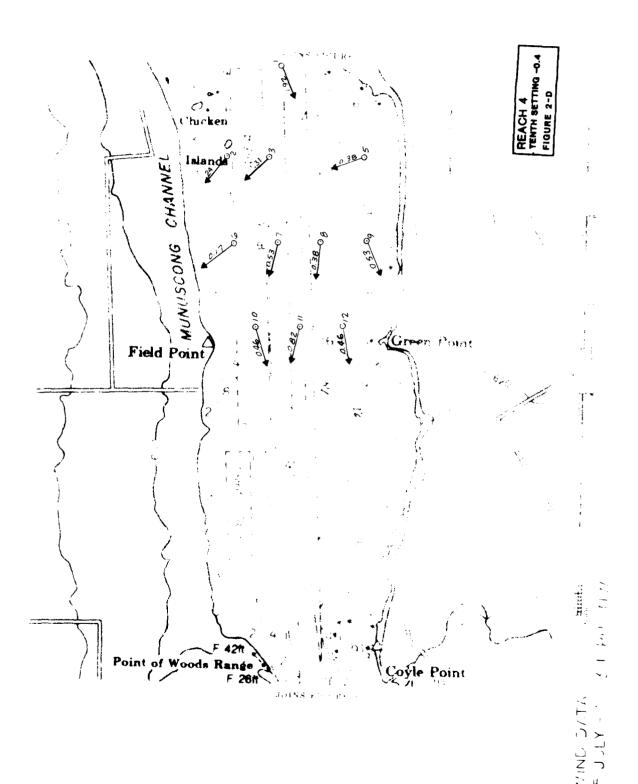
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REACH 4



REACH 4
TENTH SETTING -0.2
FIGURE 1-D

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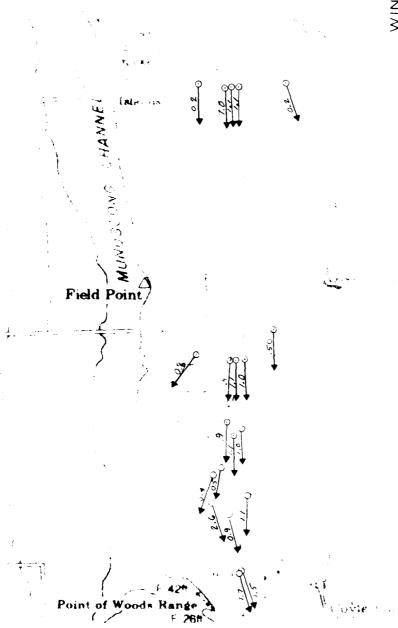


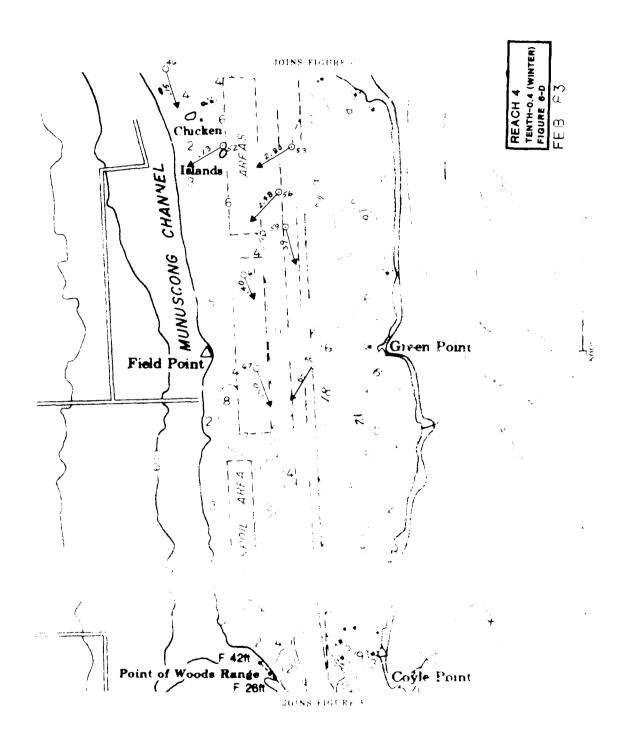
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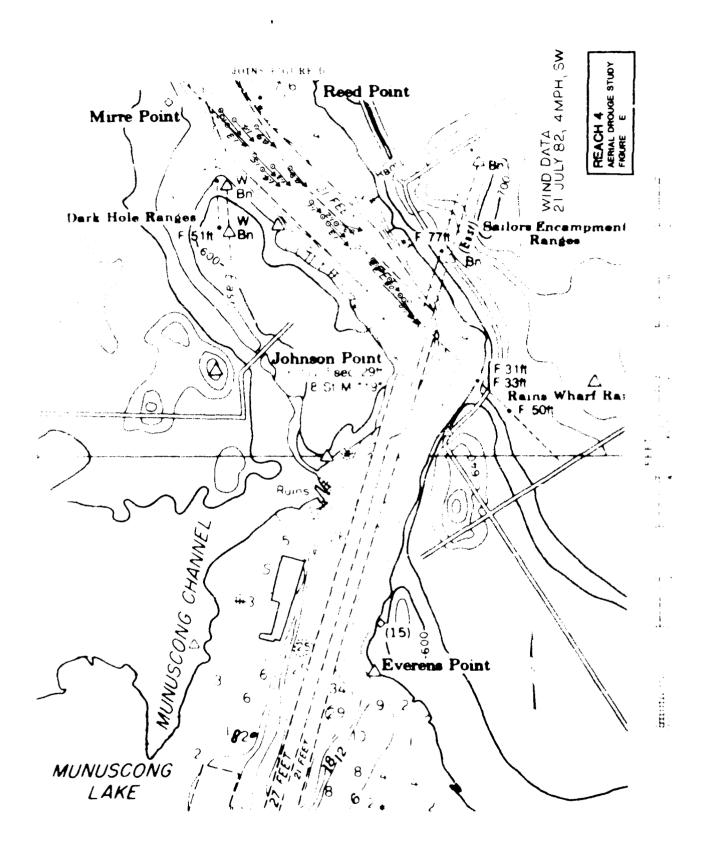
REACH 4 TENTH SETTING -0.: FIGURE 3-D

REACH 4 COMPOSITE FIGURE 4-D

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## APPENDIX E ST. MARYS RIVER OIL/TOXIC SUBSTANCE SPILL STUDY CURRENT VELOCITIES AND DIRECTIONS REACH 5

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for Reach 5 of the St. Marys River, Oil/Toxic Substance Spill Study (see Figure 3 of the main report). This reach has been divided into two figures as shown in the Index Figure (page E-1).

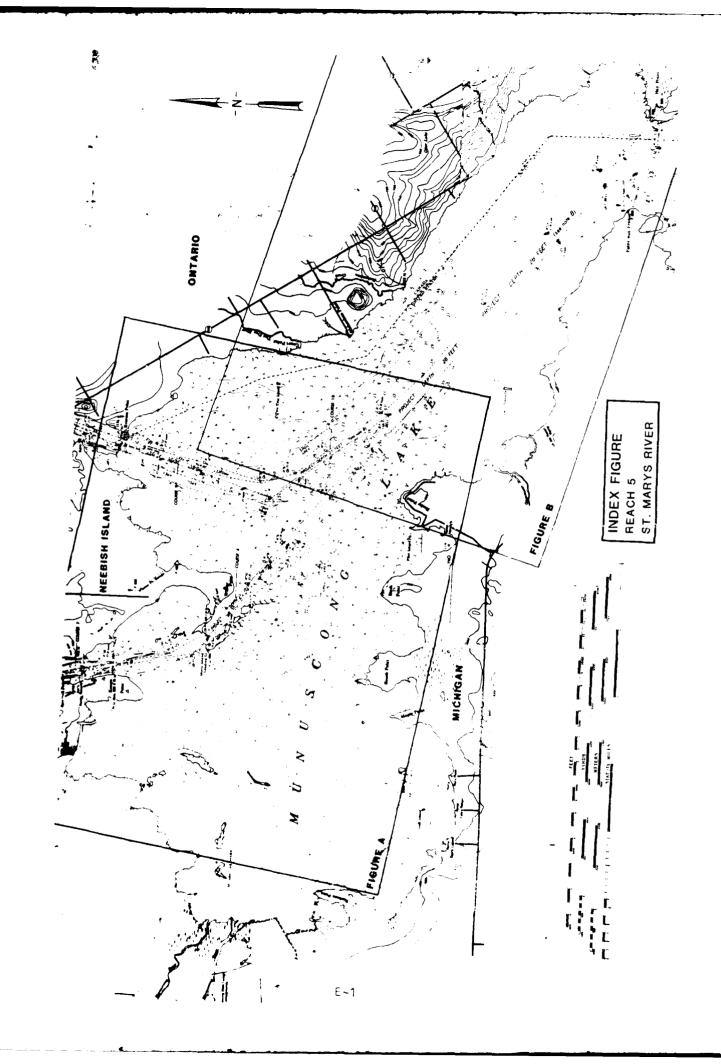
Open water current measurements were conducted between 18 and 20 July 1983 (Flow (JUL) = 102,890 cubic feet per second). Figures A and B are the current data collected for each of the 2, 4 and 8 tenths depth of the total river depth, at selected locations. Data are shown as location point (number and circle), direction of flow (arrow) and velocity in feet per second. In addition, each figure has a composite drawing developed from the data documented for that figure.

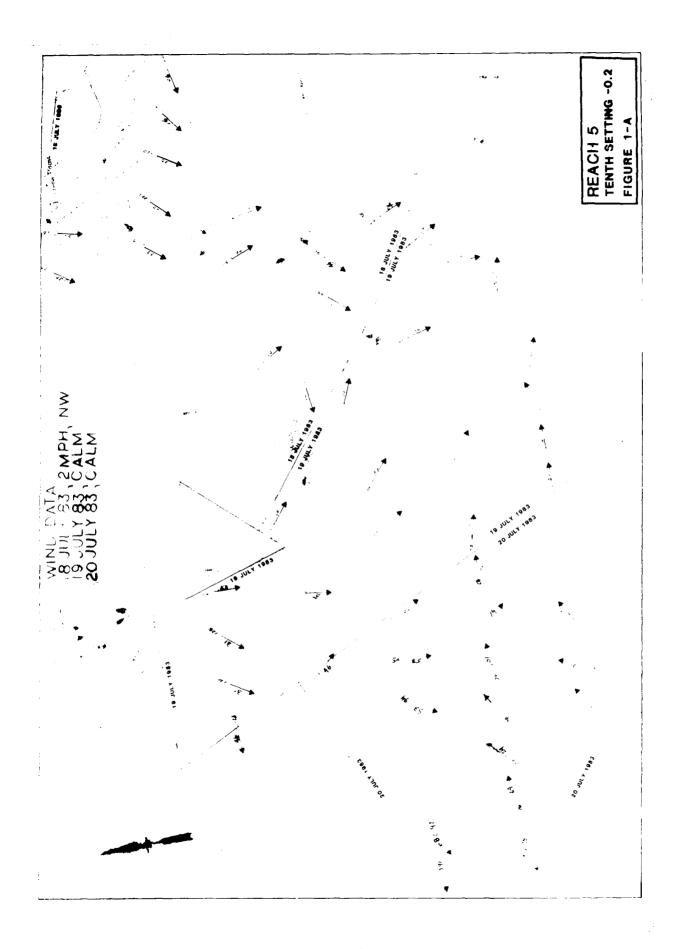
A discussion of measurement and data reduction techniques can be found in the main report.

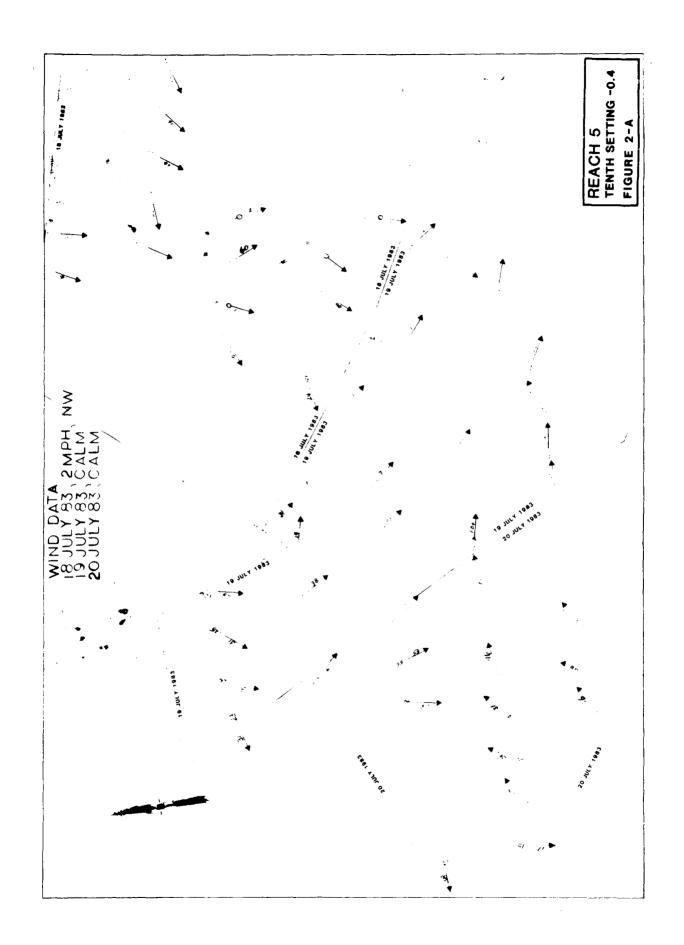
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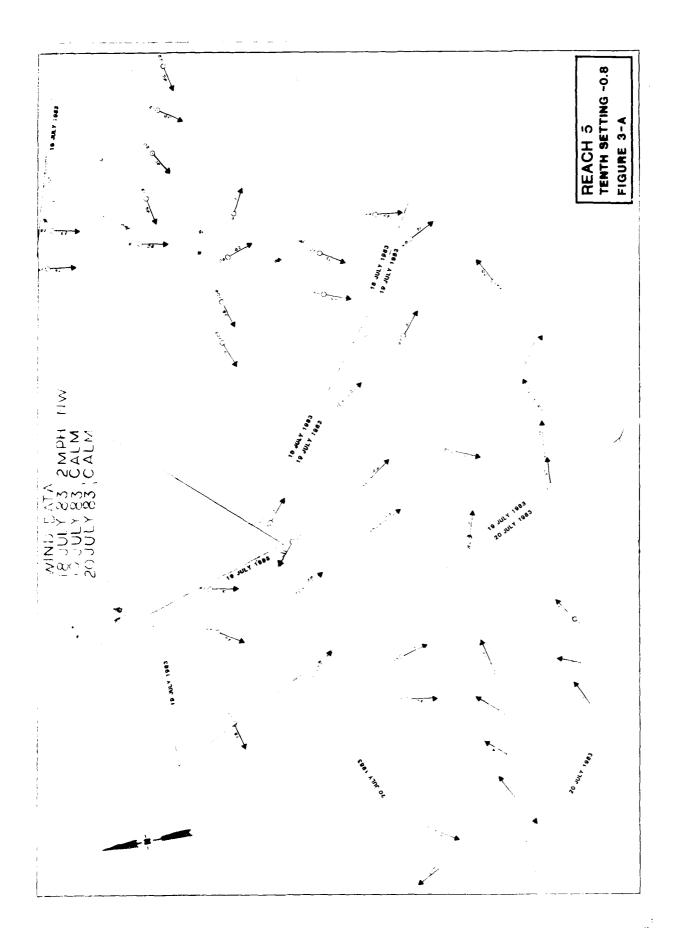
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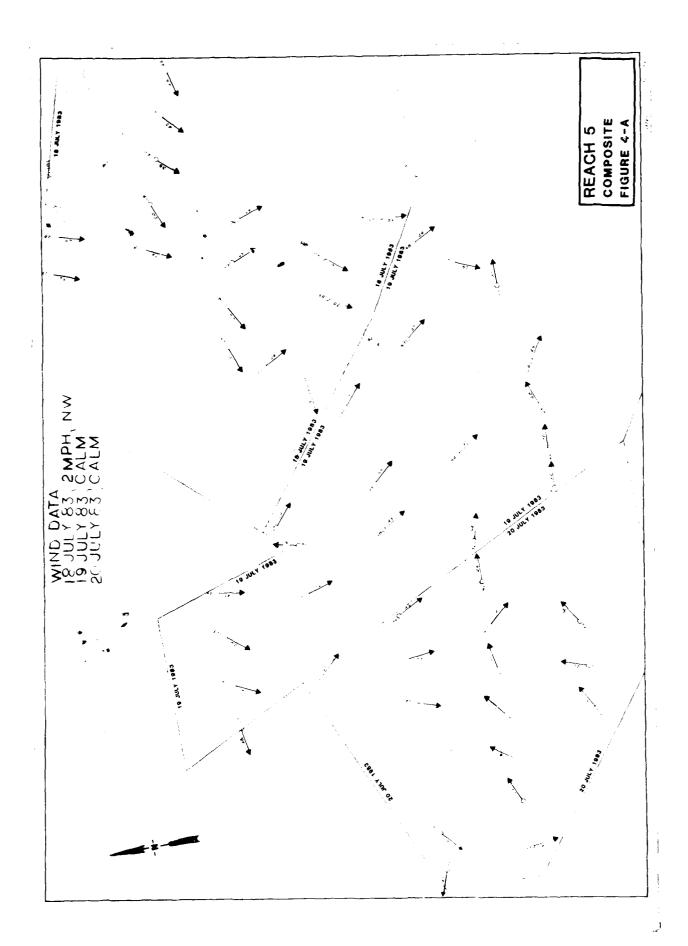


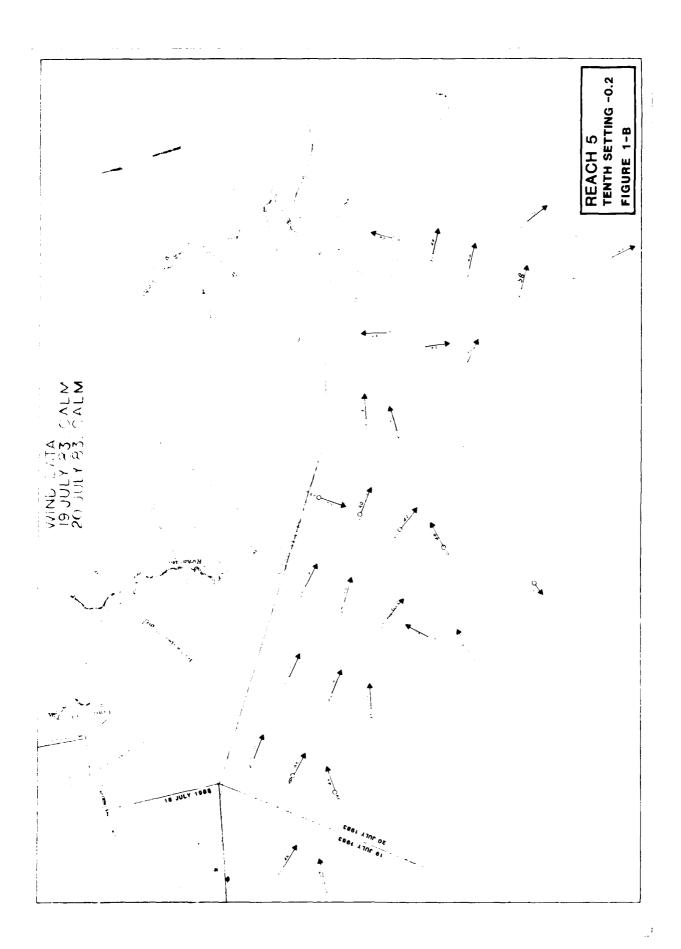


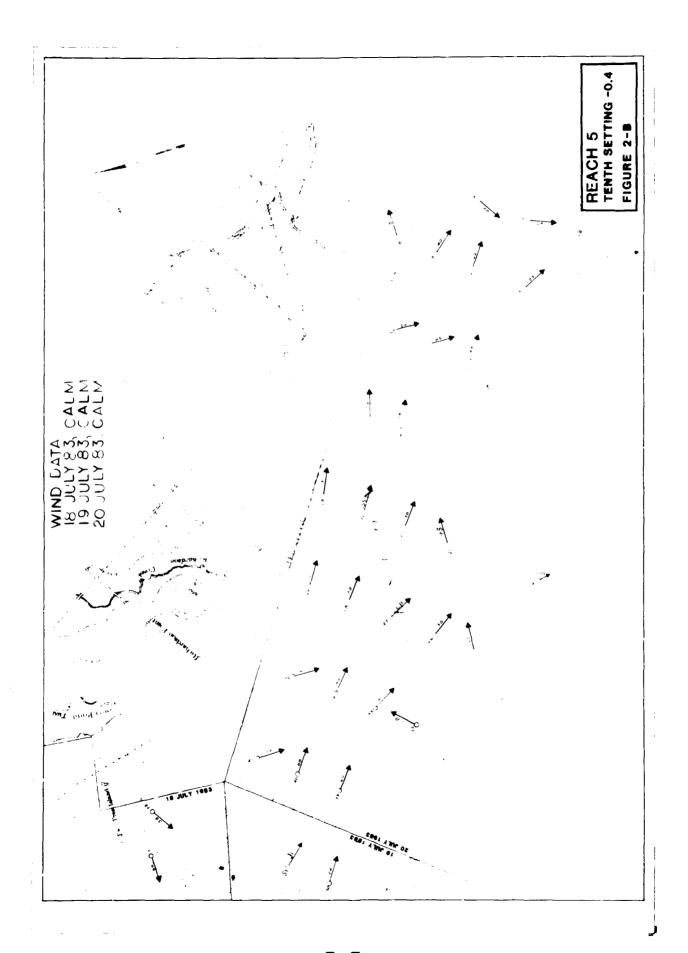


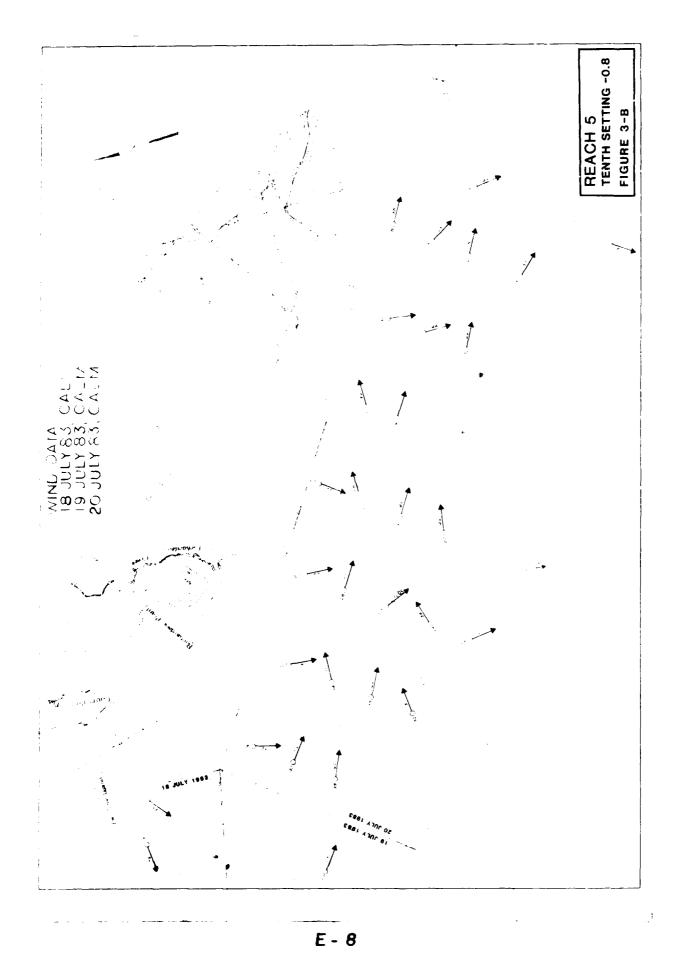


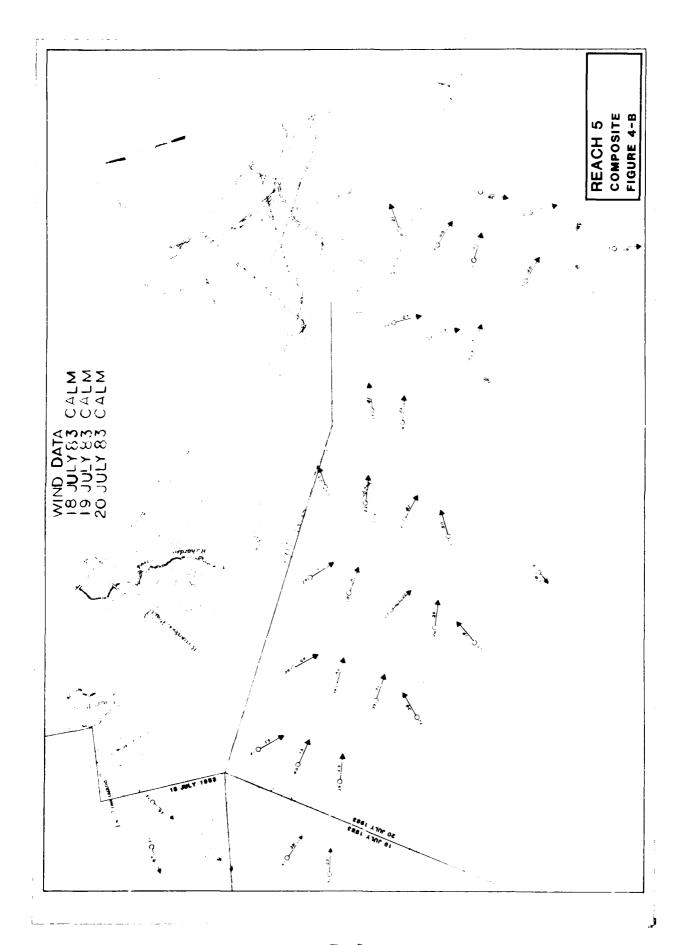
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# APPENDIX F ST. MARYS RIVER OIL/TOXIC SUBSTANCE SPILL STUDY CURRENT VELOCITIES AND DIRECTIONS REACH 6

This appendix presents current velocities and directions for Reach 6 of the St. Marys River Oil/Toxic Substance Spill Study (see Figure 3 of the main report). This reach has been divided into six figures as shown in the Index Figure (page F-1).

Open water current measurements were conducted between 19 August and 24 September 1980 (Flow (AUG) = 74,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) and Flow (SEP) = 71,980 cfs). Figures A-F display current data collected for each of the 2, 4 and 8 tenths depth of the total river depth, at selected locations. Data are shown as location point (number and circle), direction of flow (arrow) and velocity in feet per second (fps). In addition, each figure has a composite drawing developed from the open water data documented for that figure.

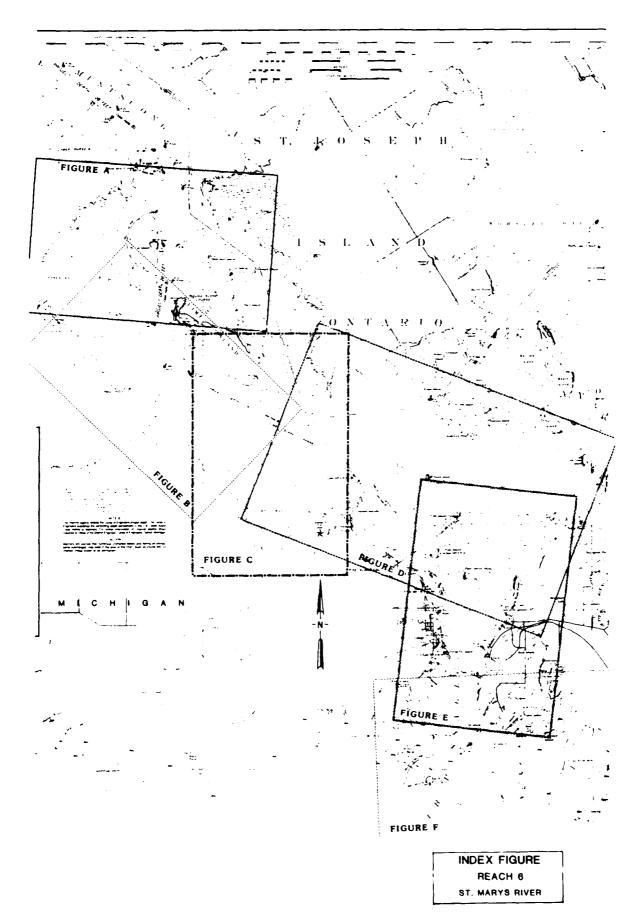
Under ice current measurements were conducted between 12 January and 12 March 1982 (Flow (JAN) = 45,380 cfs, Flow (FEB) = 45,450 cfs and Flow (MAR) = 45,390 cfs). Figures A-F display under ice current data collected for the 2 and/or 4 tenths depth of the total river depth, at selected locations. Data are shown as location point (number and circle), direction of flow (arrow) and velocity in fps.

A discussion of measurement and data reduction techniques can be found in the main report.

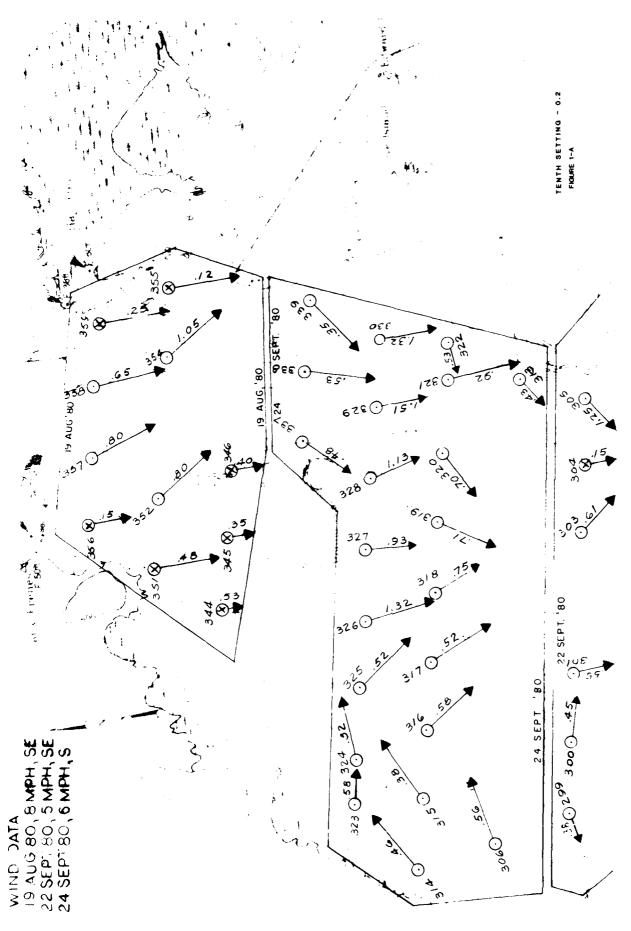
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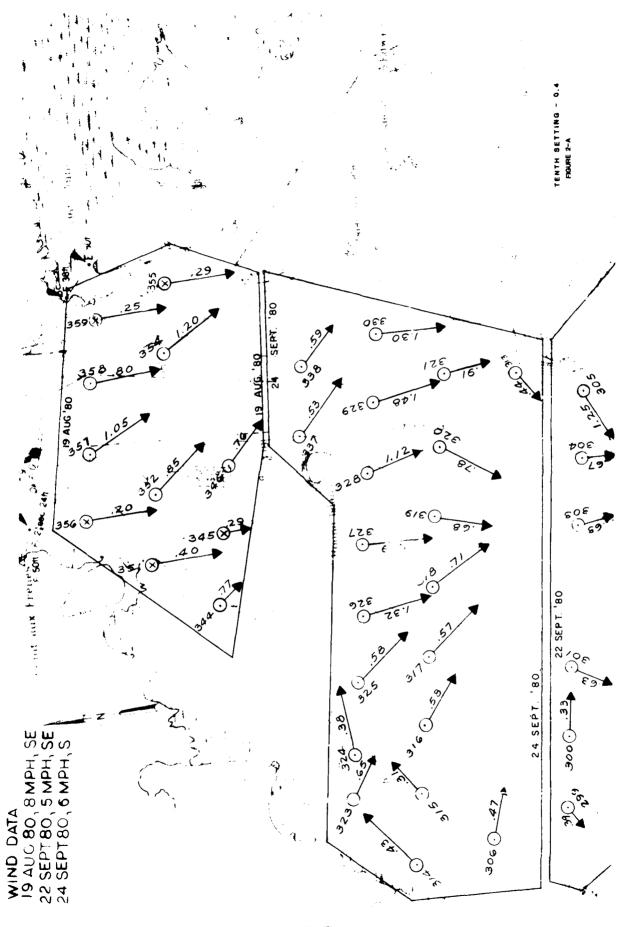
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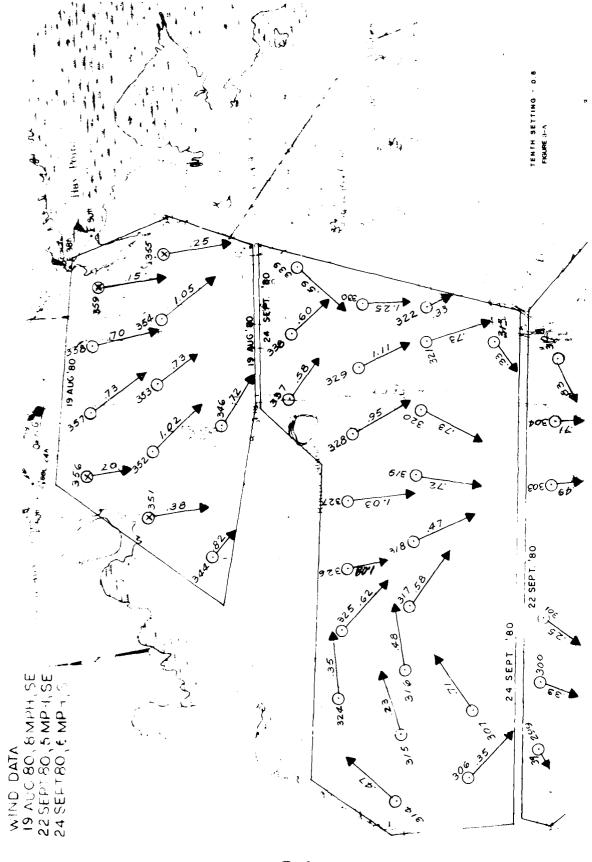
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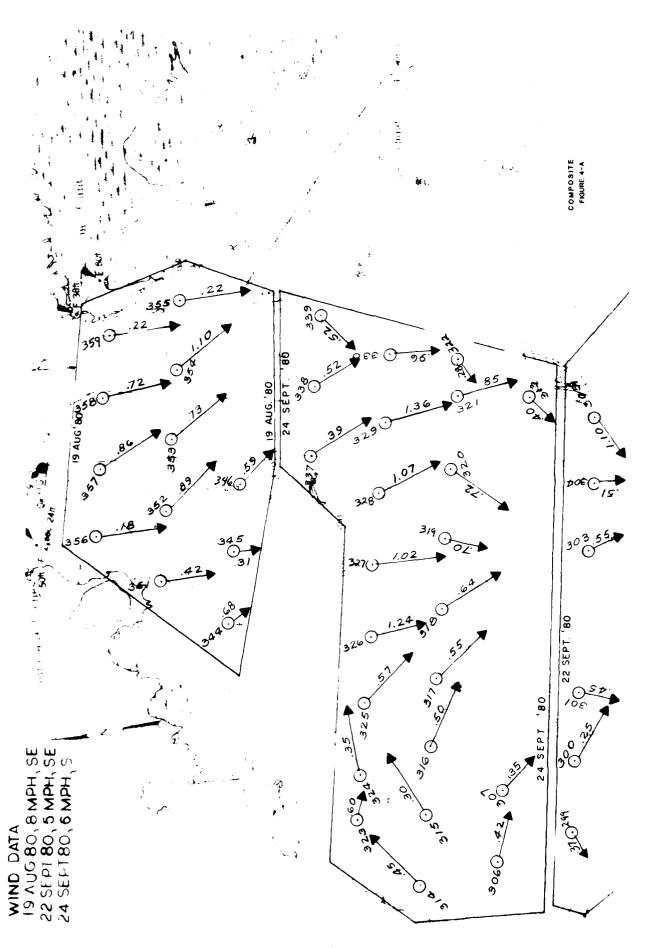


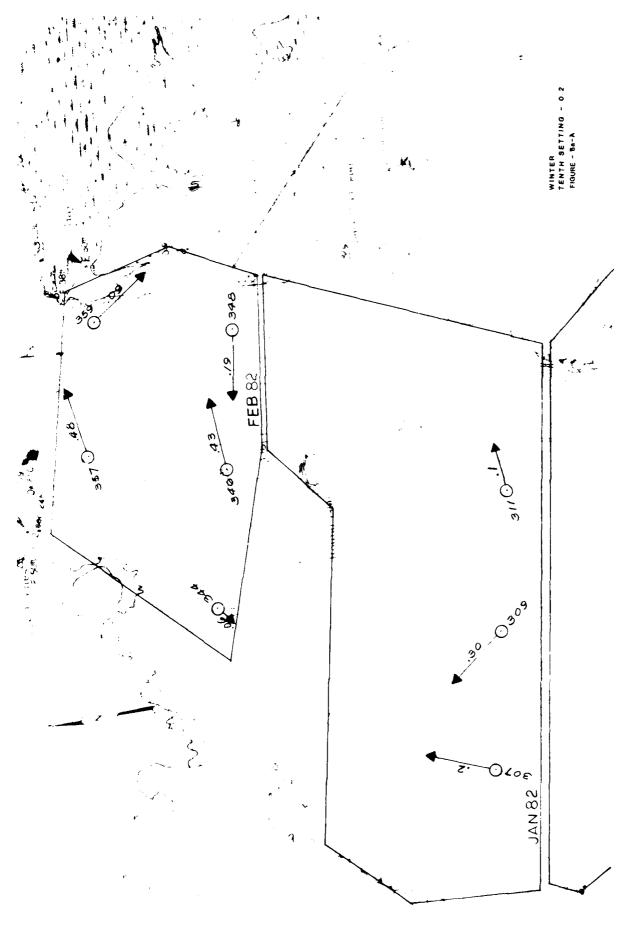
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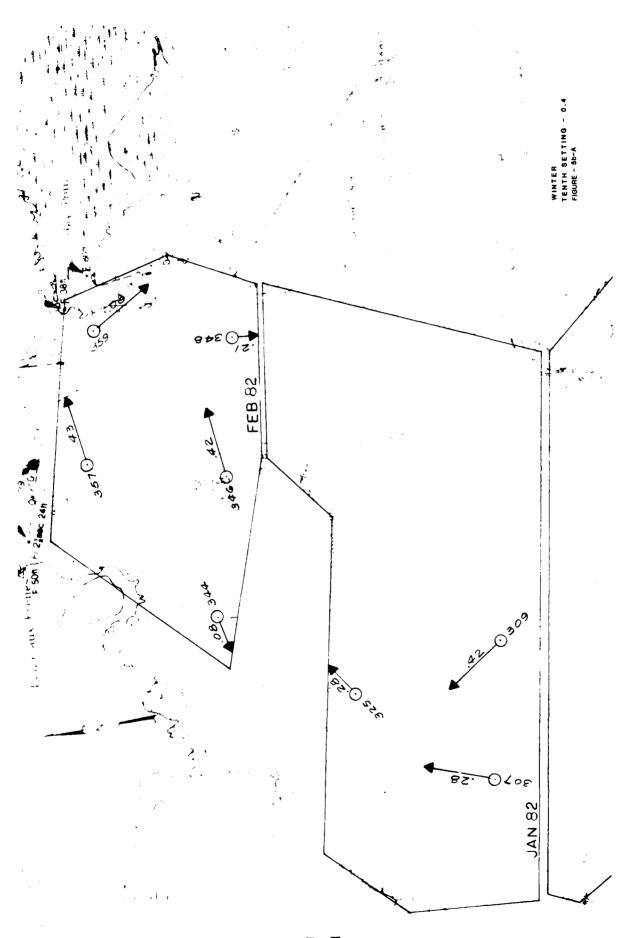
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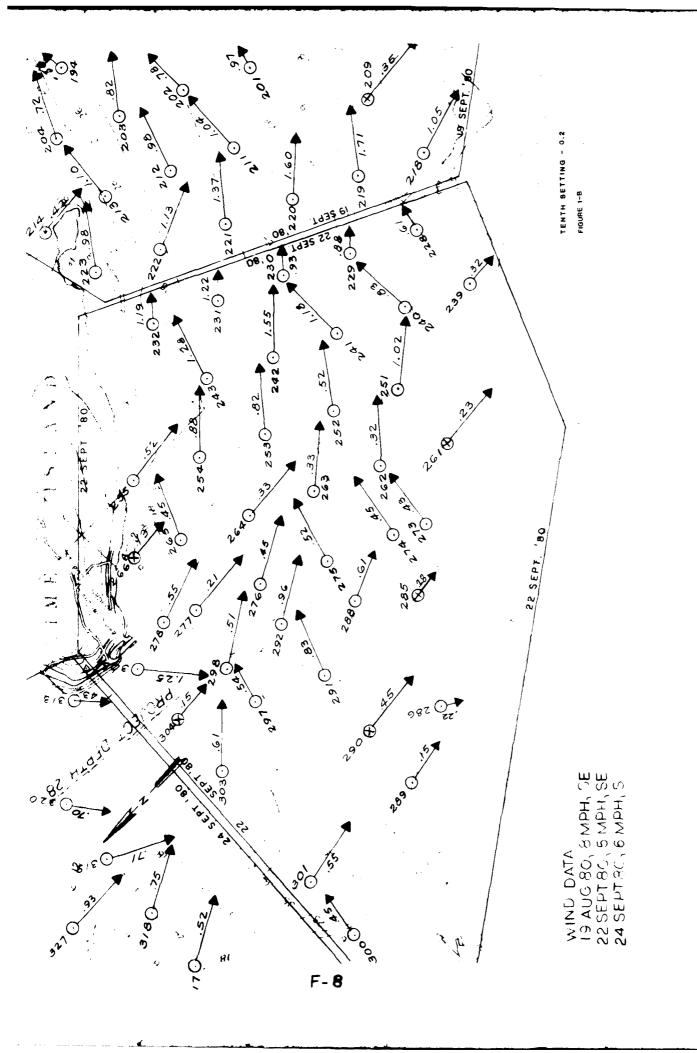


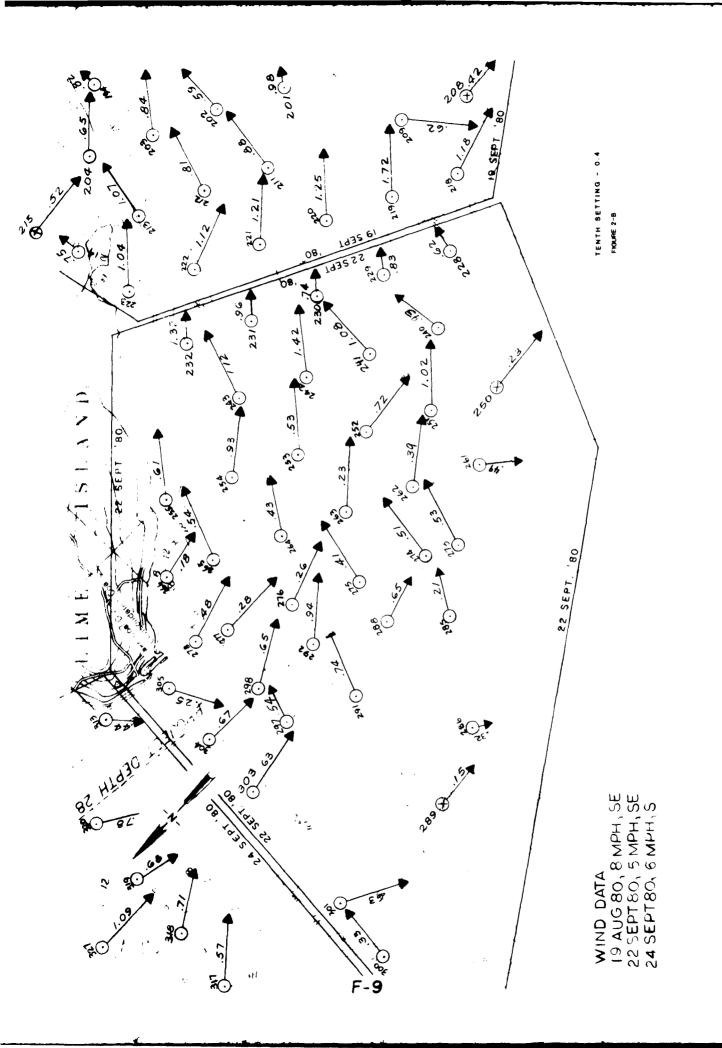


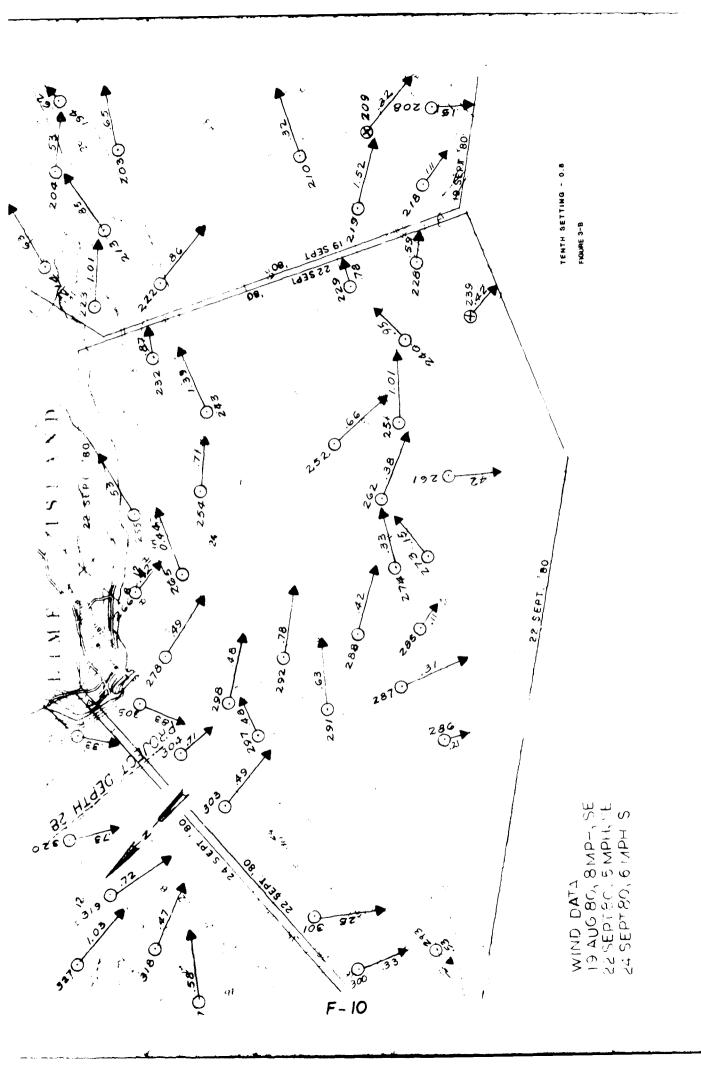
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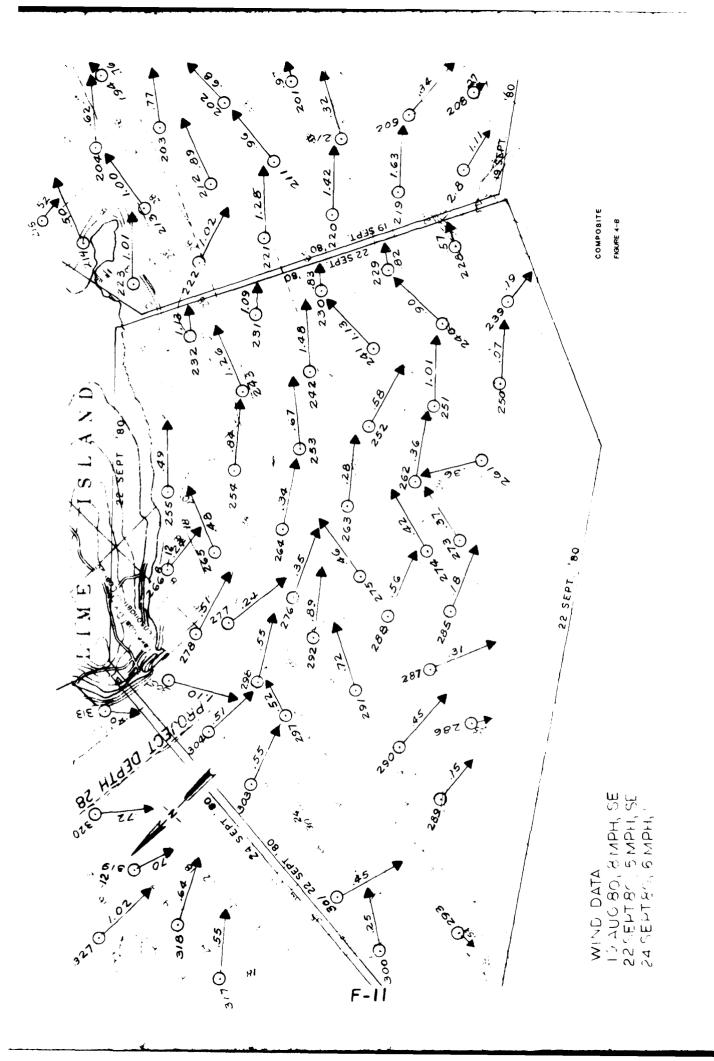


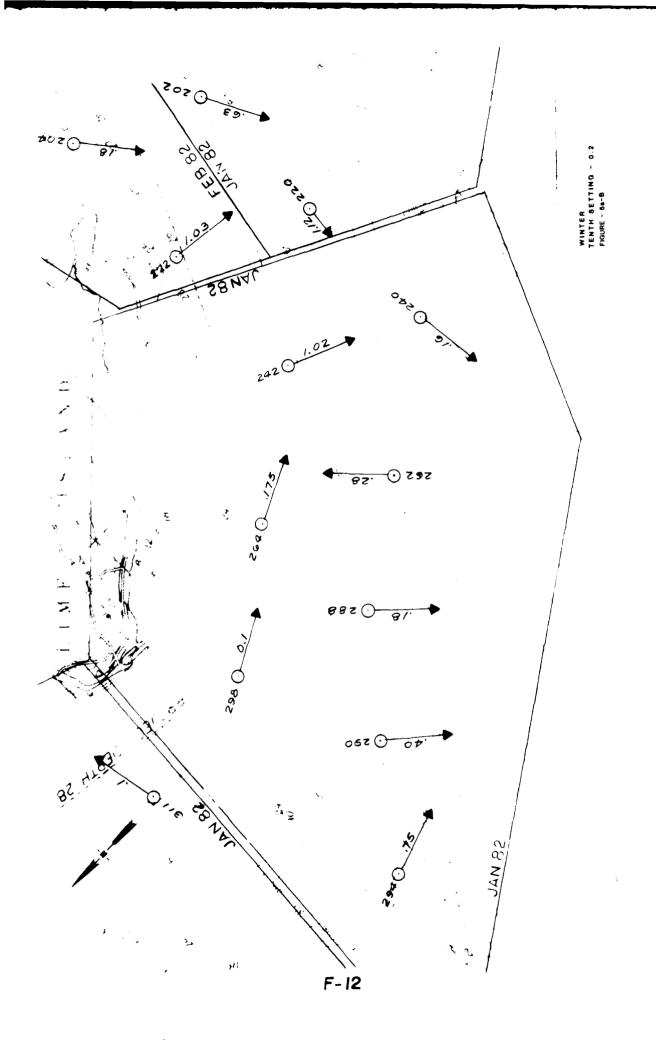
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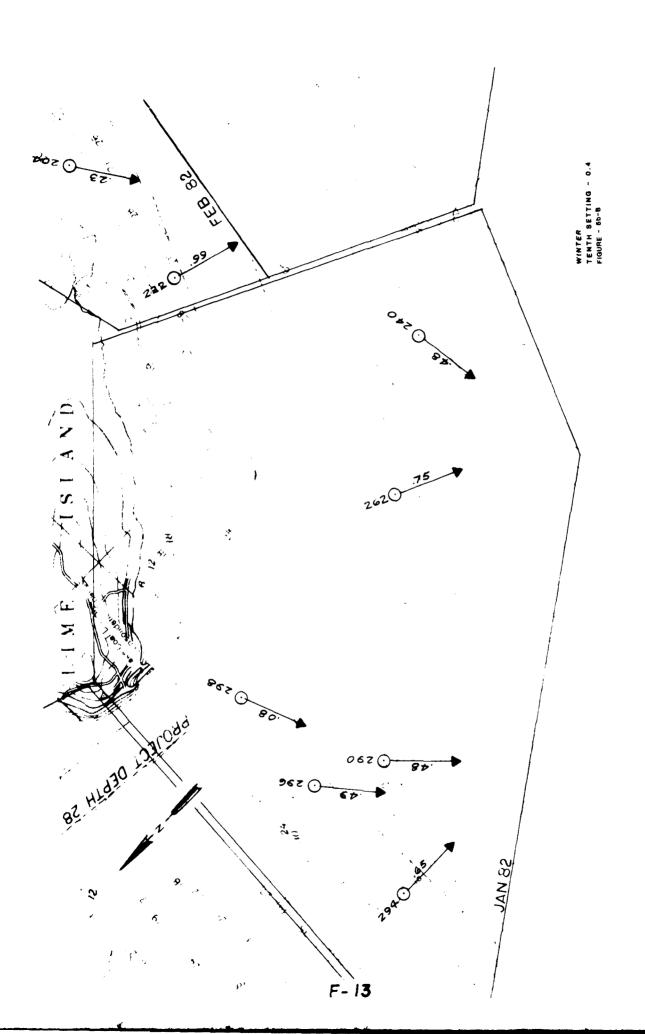


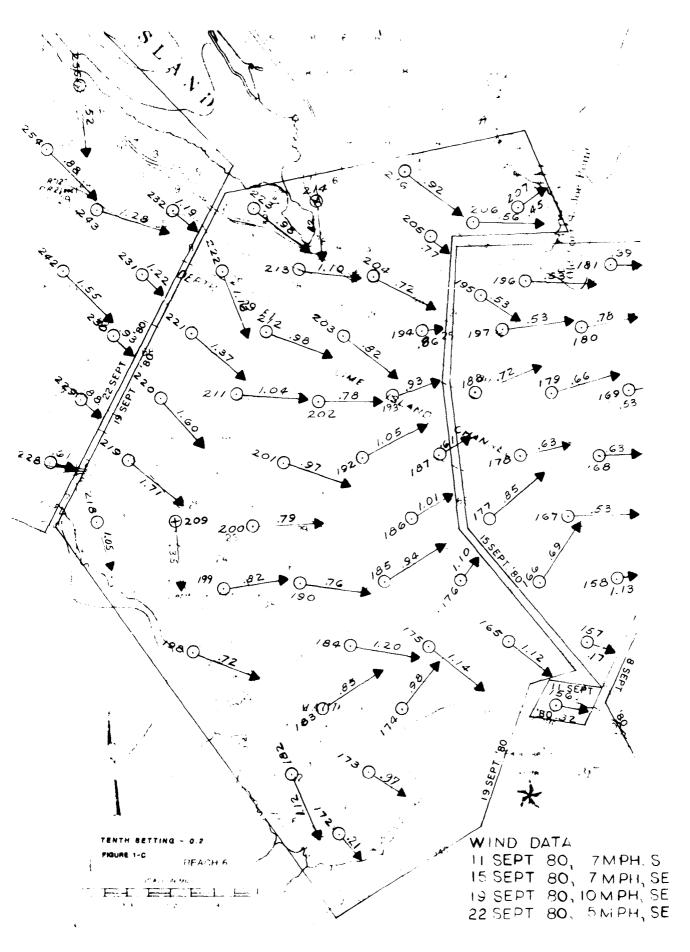




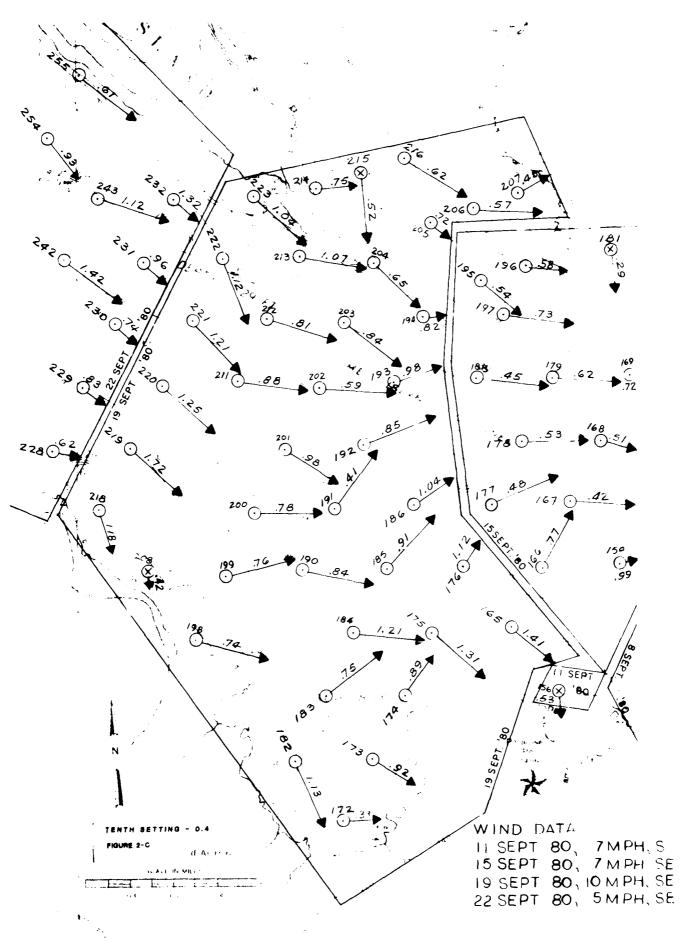




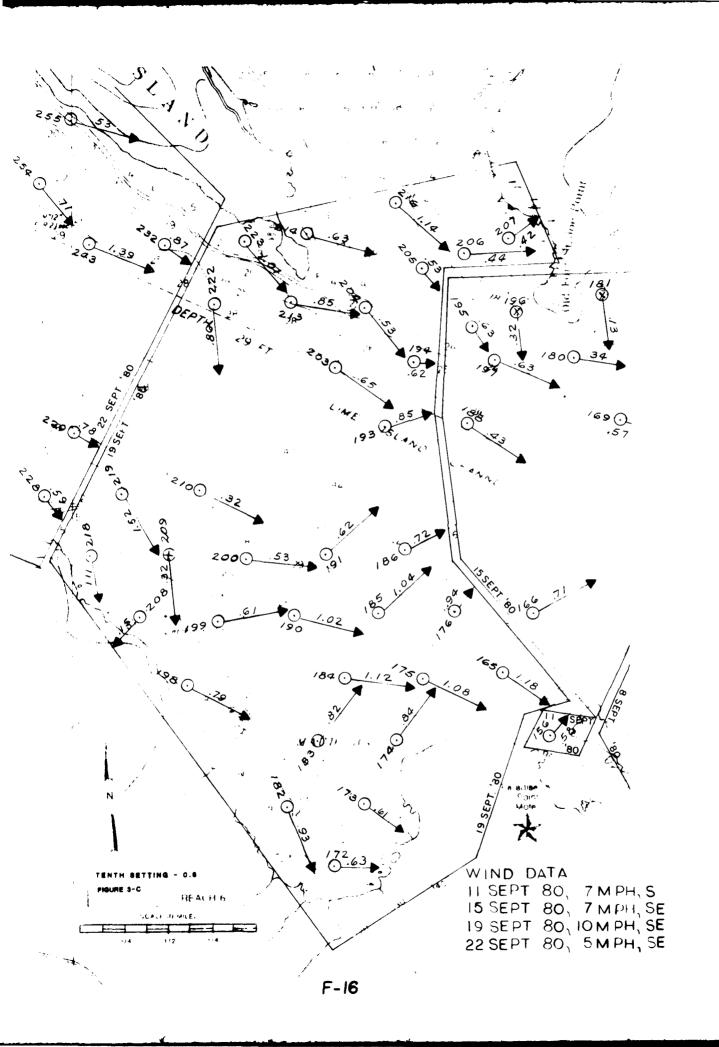


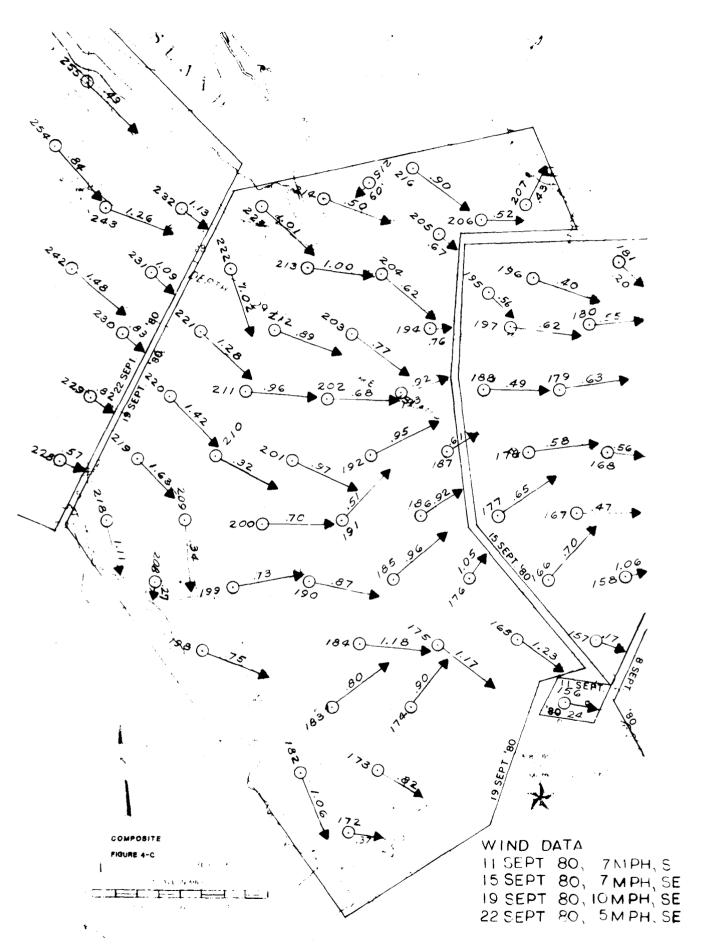


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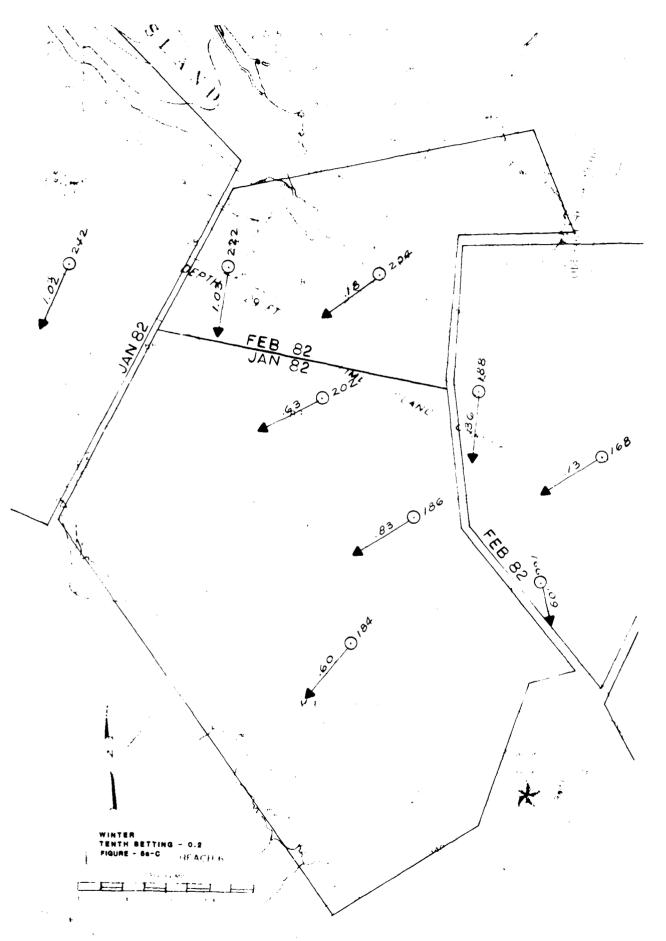


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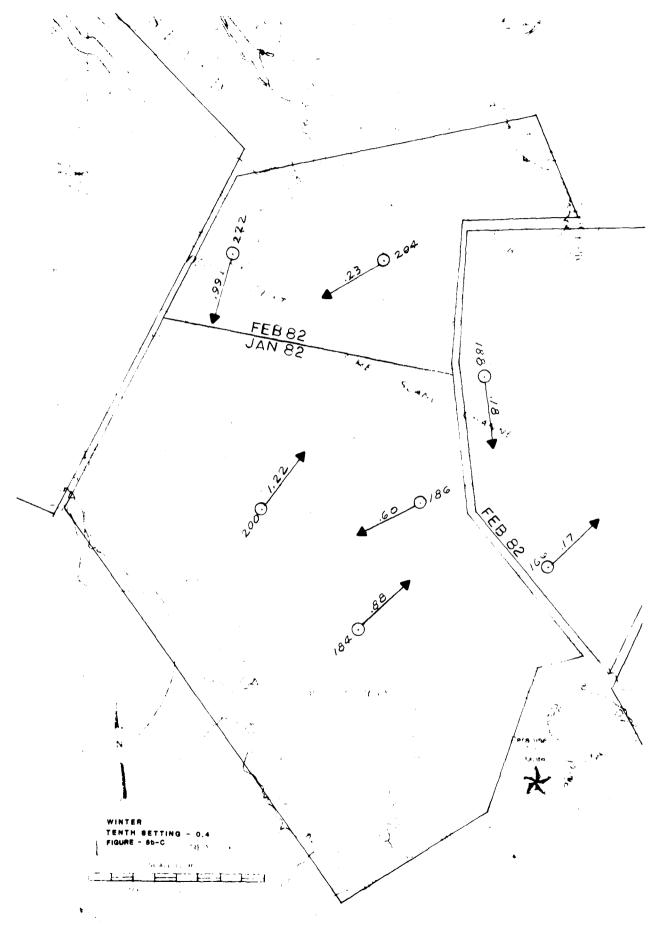




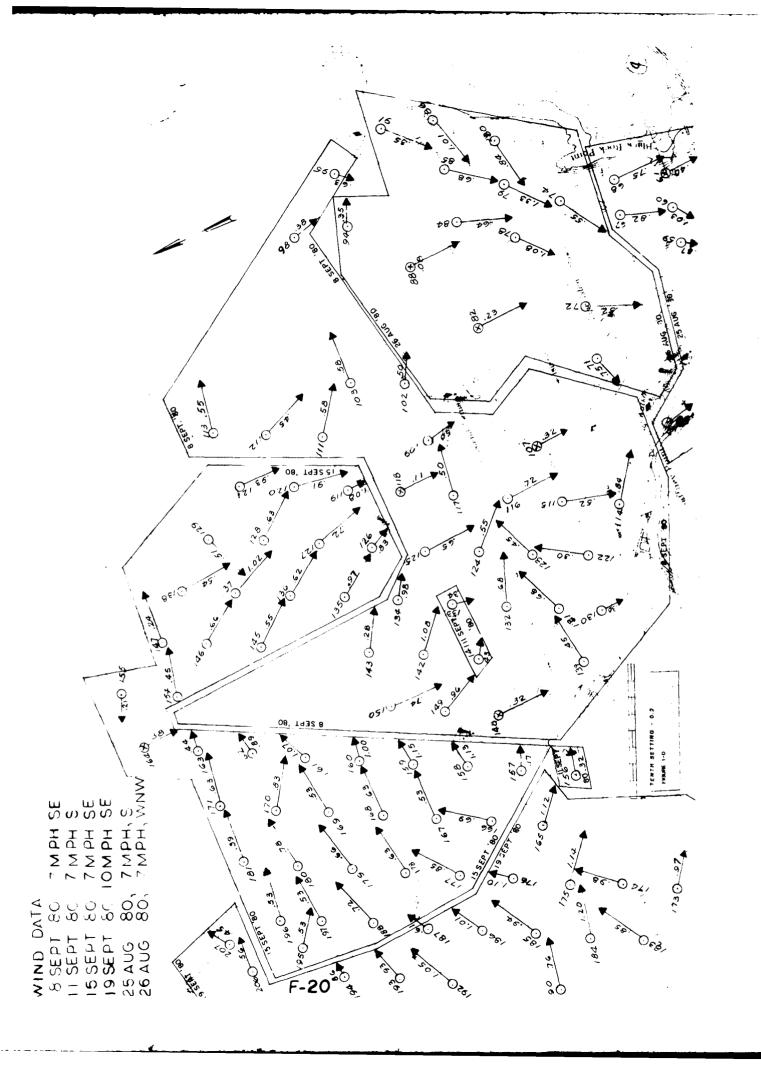
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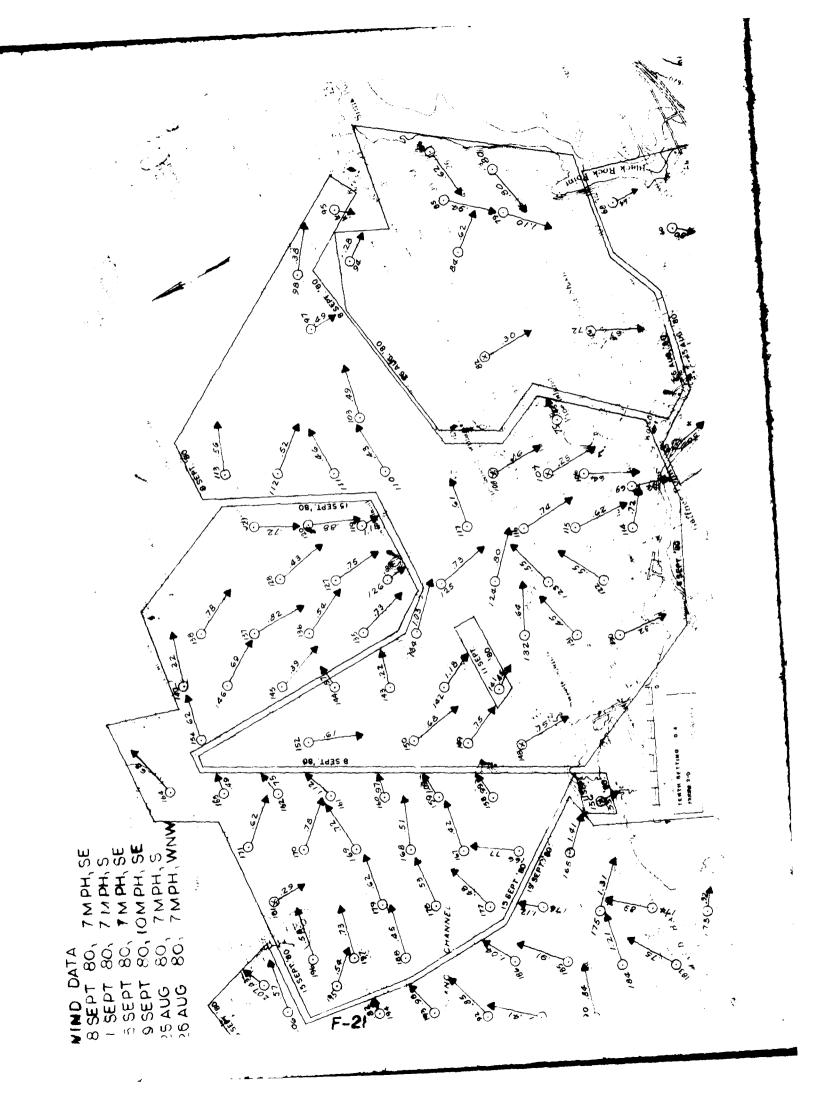


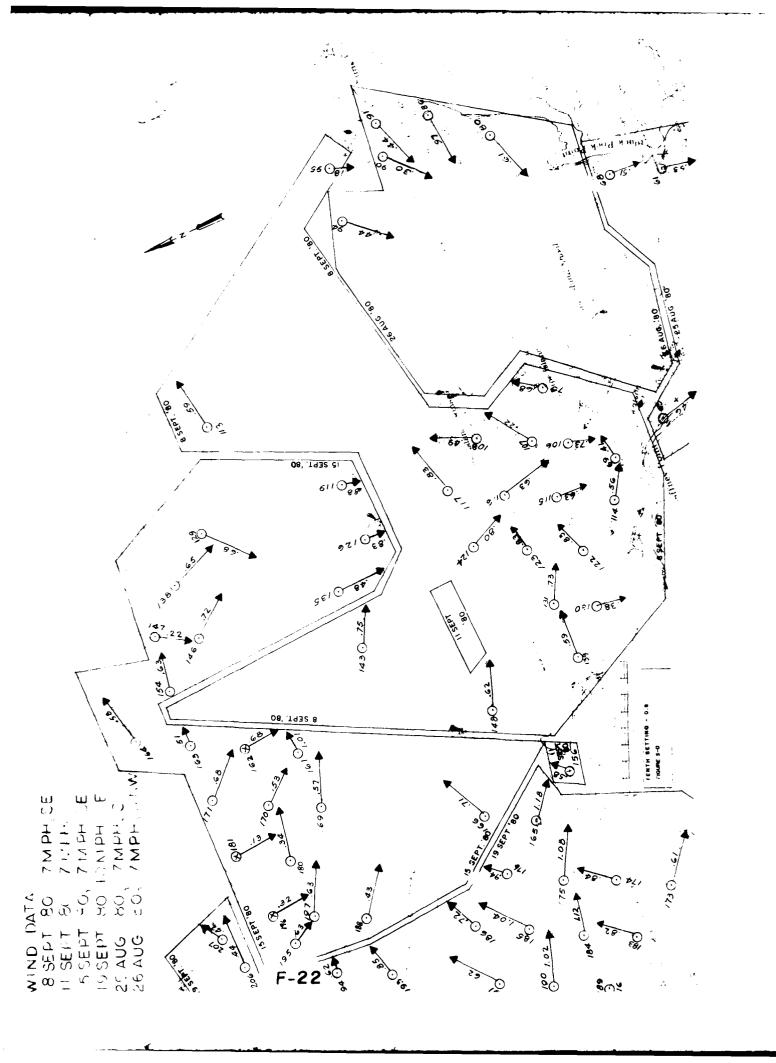
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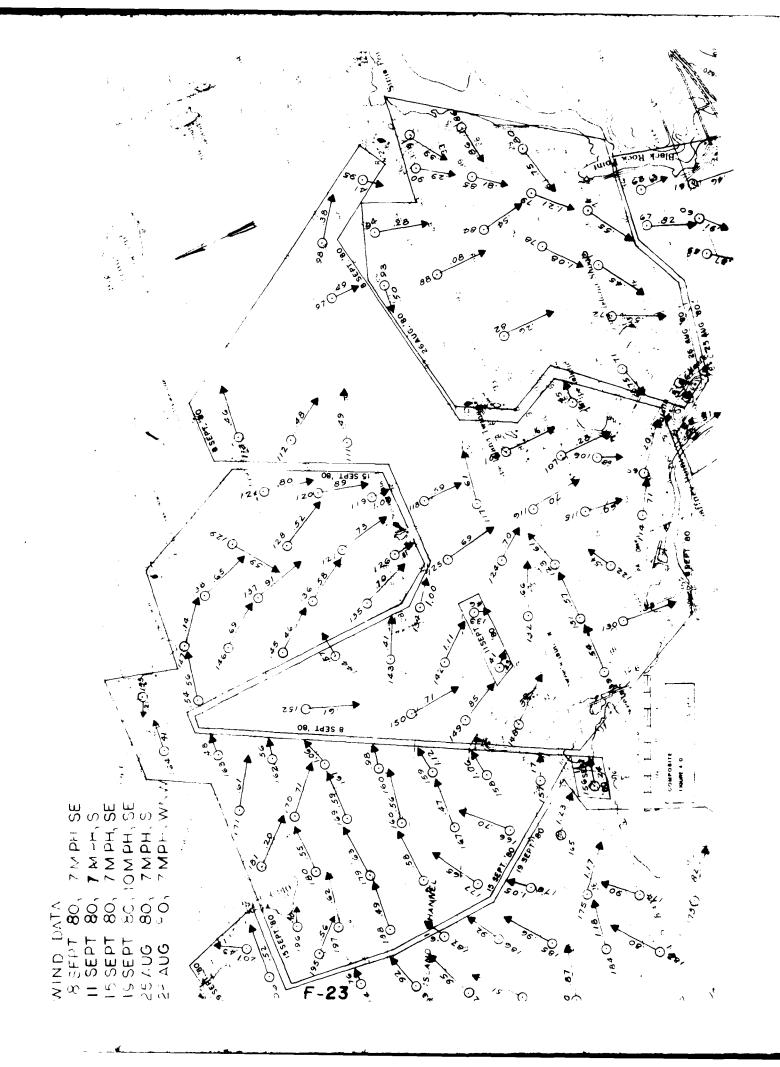


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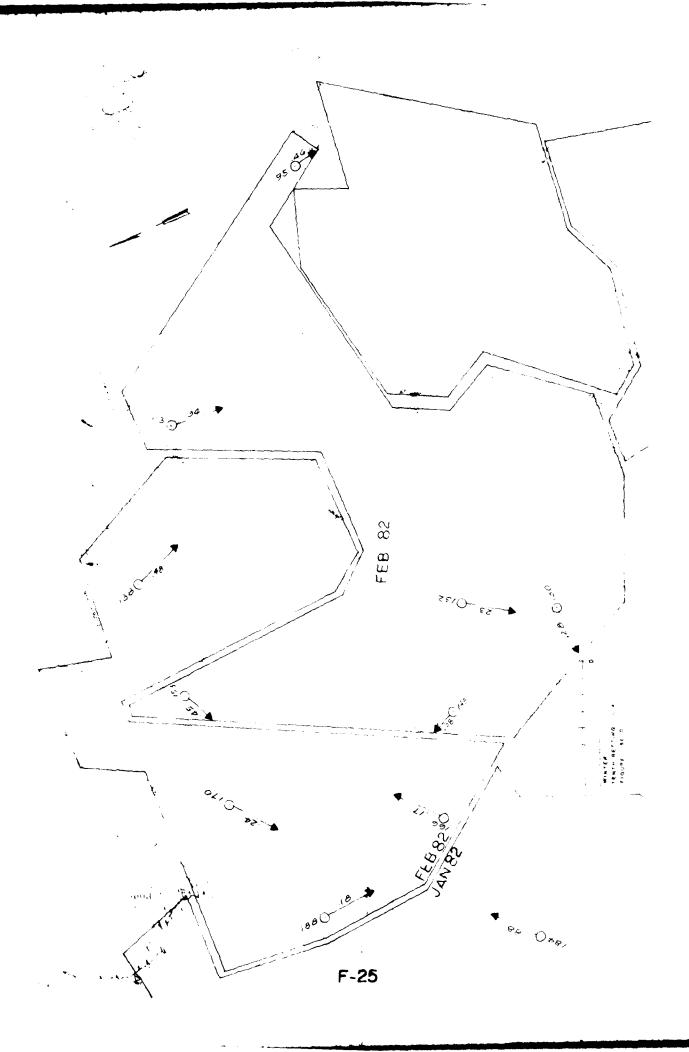


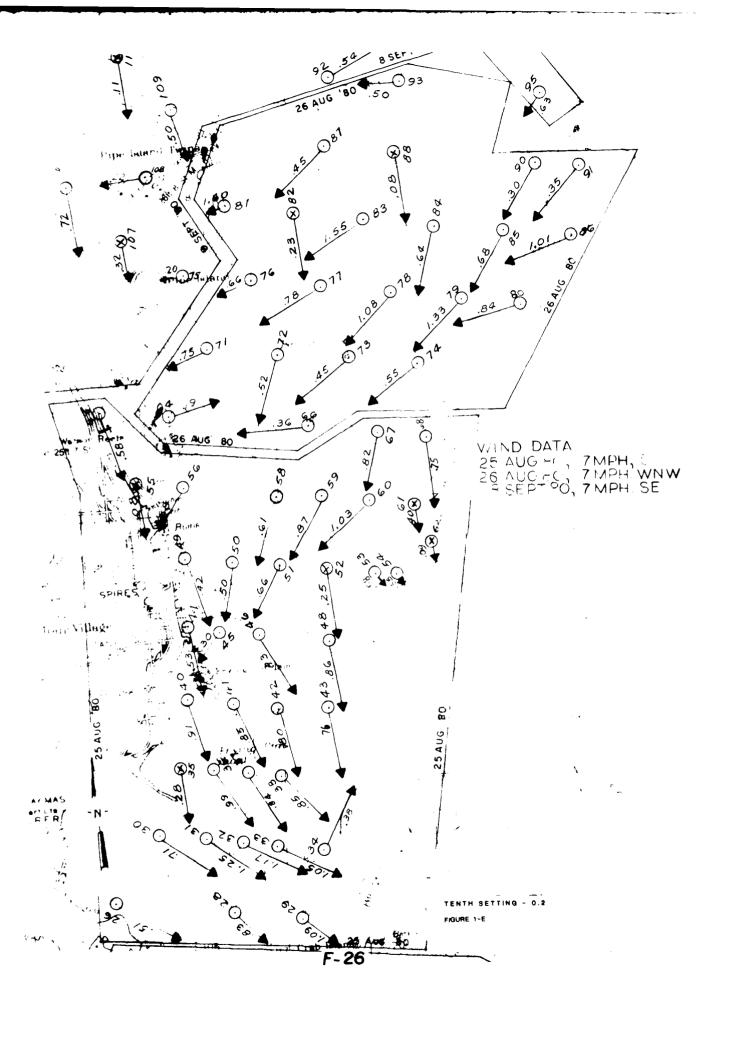


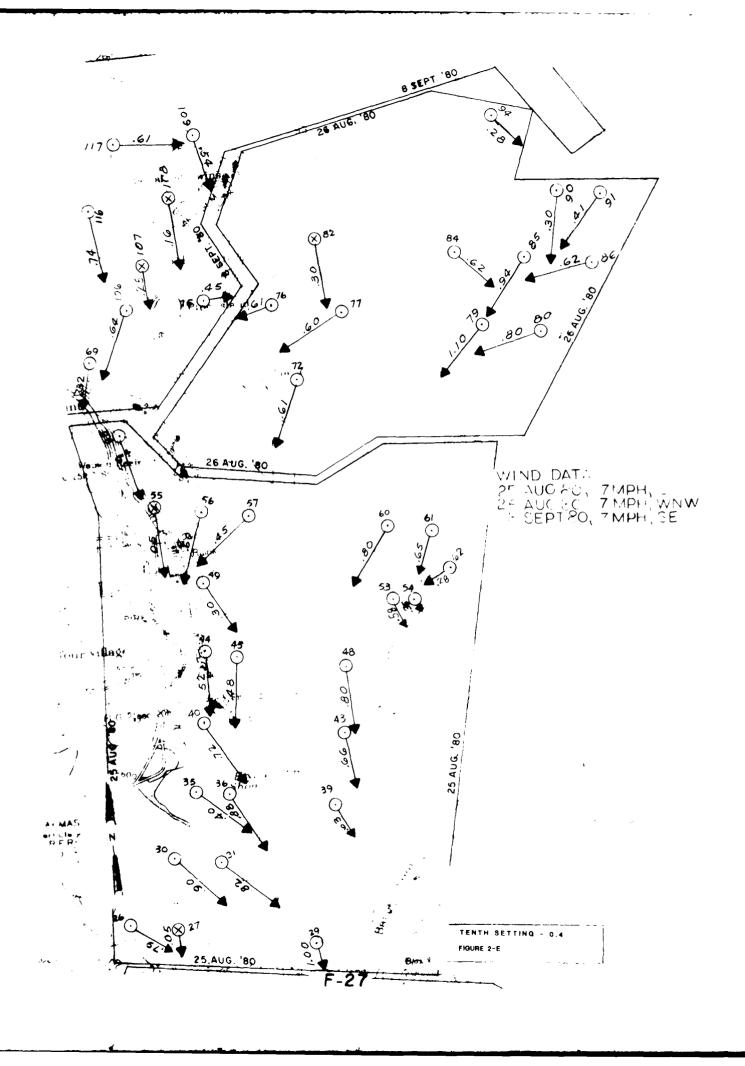


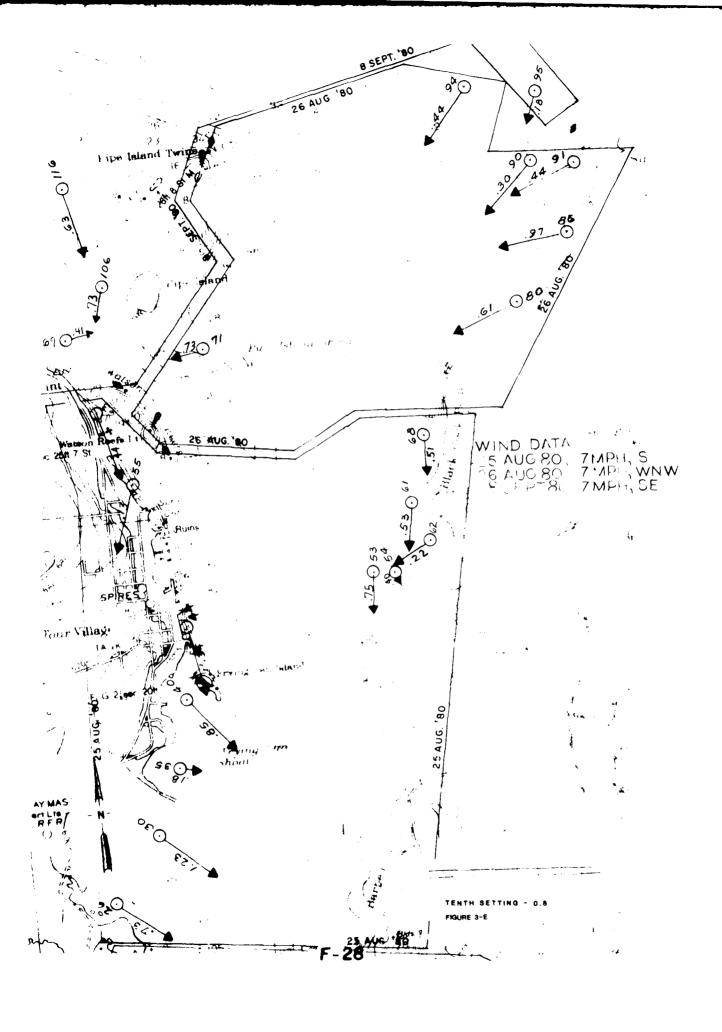


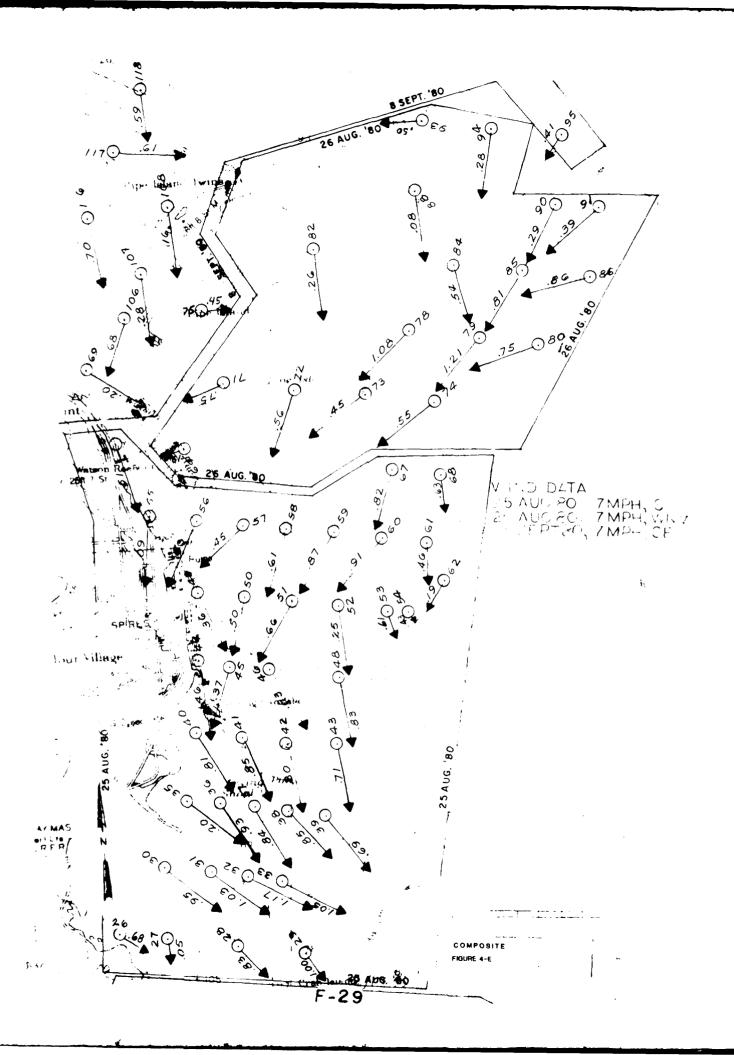


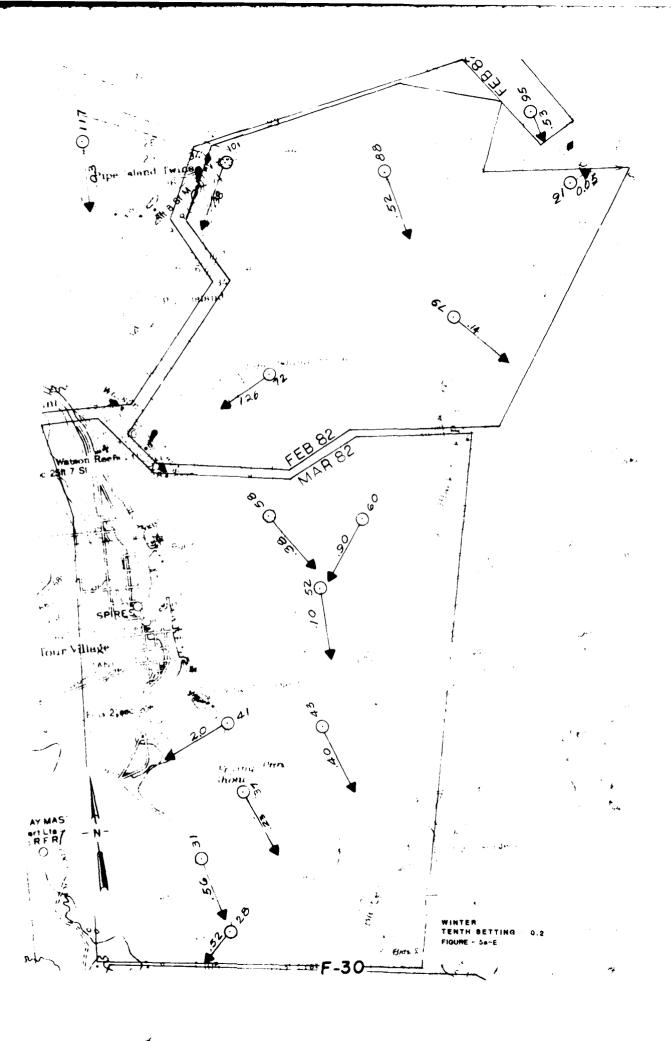


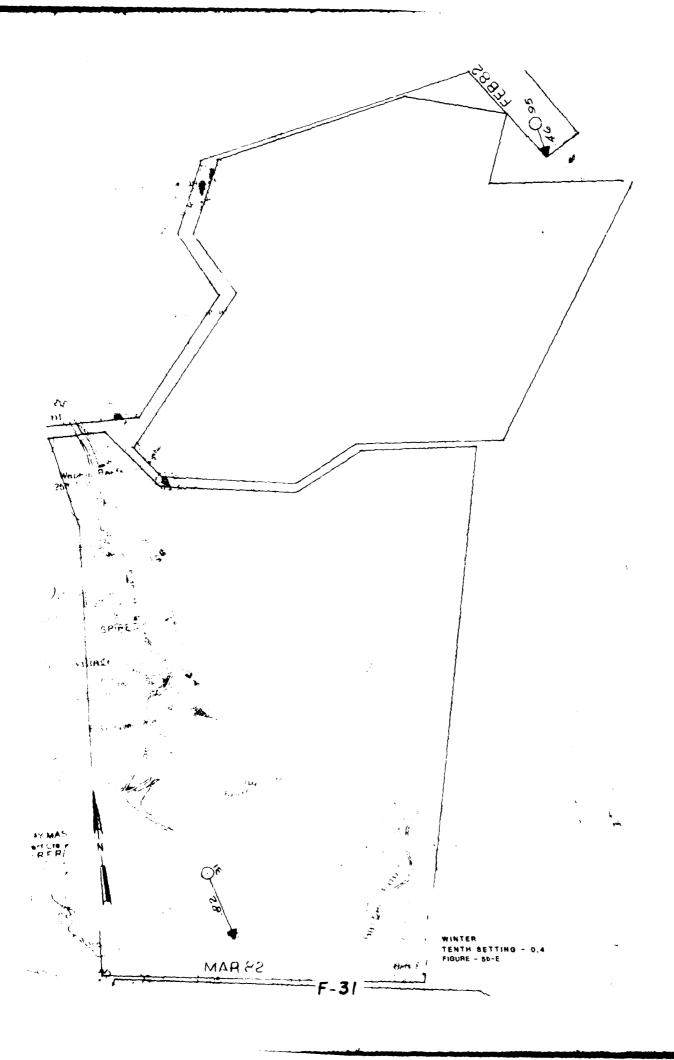


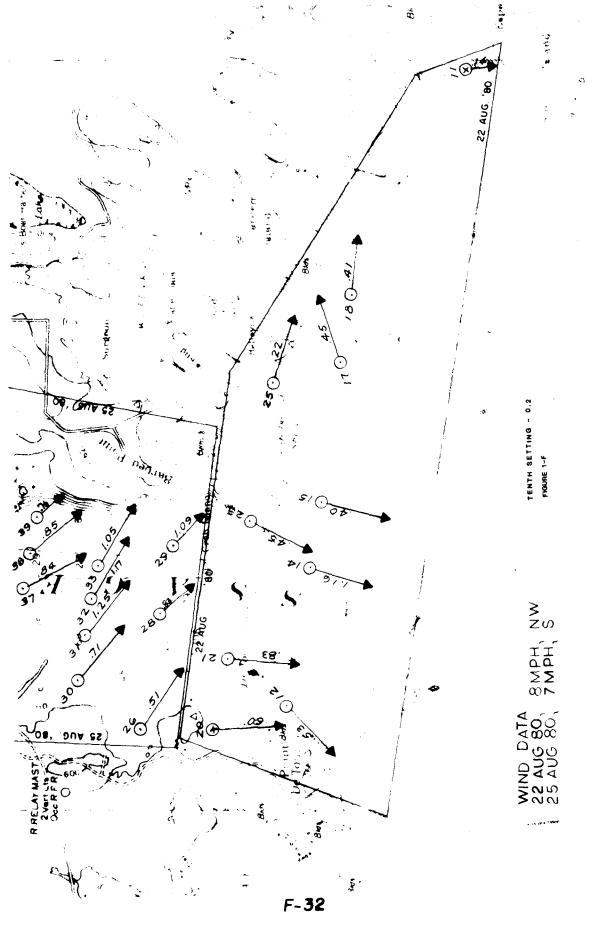


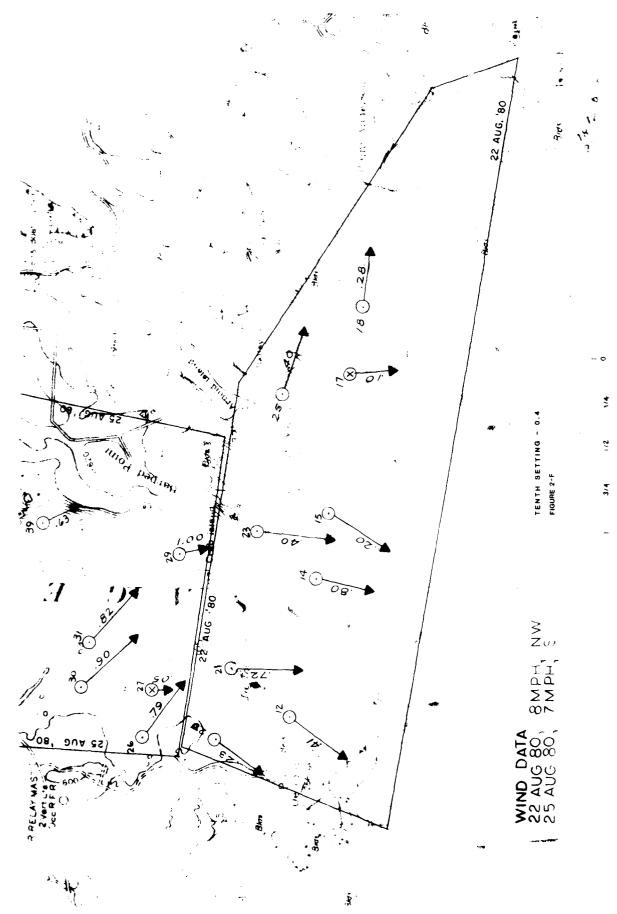




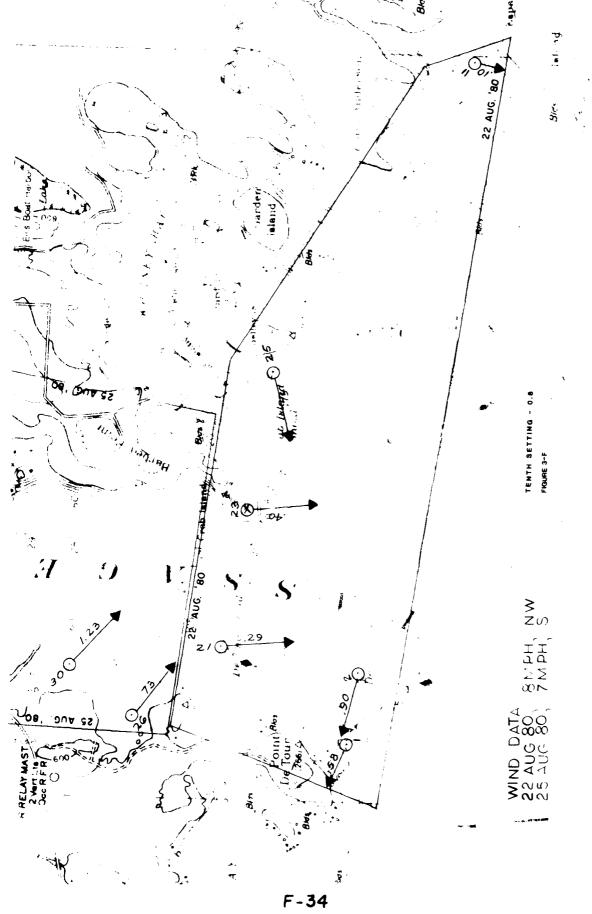


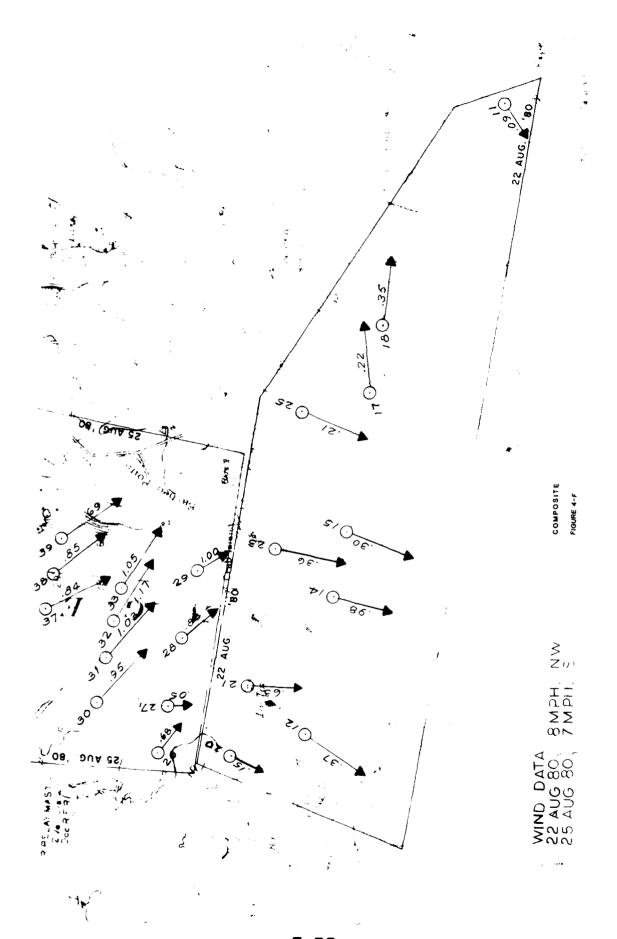






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